

RESNA Government Affairs Committee – April 2013 Update

Social Security Administration (SSA) Rulemaking on Terminology

RESNA signed onto comments submitted in March by the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) in response to a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) by the Social Security Administration (SSA). In its NPRM, the SSA proposed to replace the term “mental retardation” with “intellectual disability” wherever it appears in the medical listings and in SSA’s other rules. CCD’s Social Security Task Force had previously urged SSA to no longer use the term “mental retardation,” and it supported the proposed rule. In its comments, CCD noted that the “change in terminology is consistent with the widely expressed desire of people with intellectual disability for the use of modern, respectful language.” For more information, please see <http://www.aahd.us/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/CCDcmntsSSA1.pdf>

Bill on CRT Reintroduced in House

Rep. Joe Crowley (D-NY) and Rep. Jim Sensenbrenner (R-WI) have reintroduced the “Ensuring Access To Quality Complex Rehabilitation Technology Act of 2013” (H.R. 942). This proposed legislation would create a separate benefit category for complex rehabilitation technology (CRT) within the Medicare program to ensure adequate access to these technologies and supporting services. Although not passed in last year’s Congress, the original bill (H.R. 4378) received bipartisan support from 39 House Members, including 13 members from the House Ways & Means and House Energy & Commerce Committees. Over 40 national groups have indicated their support for the bill’s passage into law. For more information, please see <http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/z?c113:H.R.942>:

Improving Accessibility of Social Media in Government

The U.S. Department of Labor’s Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) recently launched its Federal Social Media Accessibility Working Group to evaluate the accessibility of social media platforms and their content. The group’s first effort is the development of a toolkit that provides guidance and basic standards for agencies and companies to ensure the accessibility of social media content. For more information, please visit <http://blog.howto.gov/2013/02/28/socialgov-accessibility-initiative-launches-with-toolkit-for-all/>. In support of this effort, Mario Damiani, Policy Advisor for ODEP, recently published a blog entry on why accessibility matters, giving particular consideration to screen reader interoperability and compliance with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act and Section 255 of the Communications Act. For details, please see <http://usodep.blogs.govdelivery.com/2013/03/25/accessible-information-communications-technology-and-social-media-why-they-matter/>