



■ Medtrade Spring's Education Committee understands the link between information and success, says Bob Fary. **See page 26.**



■ Product Spotlight:

This month, we asked manufacturers to submit their flagship orthotic and prosthetic products and soft goods, like this Pro•Lite Deluxe Sling and Swathe – Shoulder Immobilizer, from FLA Orthopedics. **See pages 28-29.**



■ Mass market retailers are starting to carry more home medical equipment, say respondents to our February NewsPoll. What are providers doing to compete? **See results on page 35.**

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HME News

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NEWS

- Providers lose out on payments thanks to overlap confusion. **PAGE 3**
- CRE files bid request. **PAGE 3**
- Consultant's corner: What's in store for 2013? **PAGE 4**

SMART TALK

- This month, our columnists tackle internal processes, data needs, accreditation steps and ACO waivers. **PAGES 12-13**

COMMENTARY



■ Tapping into your customers in a social way allows you to gain insight into what makes them tick, says consultant Anna McDevitt. Just make sure you understand the purpose of each social media tool so you can choose the most appropriate.

DEPARTMENTS

PROVIDERS

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- Family Medical turns reimbursement loss into retail gain. **PAGE 17**

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New sense of urgency for MPP

'We have another bite of the apple,' says Invacare's Cara Bachenheimer

BY LIZ BEAULIEU, Editor

WITH NO time to lick their wounds, industry stakeholders are now targeting a must-pass bill to address a series of spending cuts as a potential vehicle for their market-pricing program (MPP).

The "fiscal cliff" deal, which did not include language to replace competitive bidding with MPP, delays \$130 billion in automatic spending cuts until March 1. That gives stakeholders a small window to resurrect the program.

Diabetes payments pushed off a cliff

BY THERESA FLAHERTY, Managing Editor

WASHINGTON – Medicare payments for all diabetes testing supplies stand to be drastically reduced this summer.

The "fiscal cliff" deal passed

by Congress on Jan. 2 included a provision that would reduce the Medicare payment amounts for diabetes testing supplies obtained at retail settings to the Round 2 rates when those rates

CLIFF SEE PAGE 25

"We have another bite of the apple, but we need to do everything we possibly can to get our act together and get into whatever legislation moves in the next 60 days," said Cara Bachenheimer, senior vice president of government relations for Invacare.

A possible first step in getting that act together: Rep. Nydia Velazquez, D-N.Y., on Jan. 3 introduced H.R. 27, a bill to repeal competitive bidding. Velazquez is the ranking member of the House Small Business Committee.

MPP SEE PAGE 6

INVACARE SETTLES WITH FDA

Limited operations, layoffs

BY LIZ BEAULIEU, Editor

ELYRIA, Ohio – A Dec. 21 agreement with the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) will limit operations at Invacare's Taylor Street manufacturing facility, but HME providers will still have access to the manufacturer's manual and power wheelchairs, says Gerry Blouch, president and CEO.

Invacare may continue to manufacture and distribute wheelchairs and seating systems under certain conditions: when a patient requests the same or newer ver-

sion of an existing product and the clinician submits a form acknowledging the agreement; and when an evaluation determines the product is medically necessary for a particular condition that can't be addressed by another manufacturer's product, and the clinician and physician submit a form acknowledging the agreement.

"There will be some additional documentation," Blouch said. "At a time when the government is putting new rigors on documentation, it's not the best news providers have had, but the forms don't deviate from things they're accustomed to. We're confident

that with our education and support, they'll find the process reasonable."

Additionally, Invacare may continue to fulfill orders and written quotes already in its system by Dec. 21, the date a district court approved the agreement.

Invacare acknowledges that the agreement will have an impact on operations. Following the agreement, Invacare announced that it would lay off 143 employees at its

INVACARE SEE PAGE 32



Wake up

A recent pilot project between Philips Respironics and several Kroger pharmacies in Ohio has served as a wake-up call for HME providers. See story page 30.

Invacare sells ISG.

See story page 30

Giants in complex rehab merge

BY ELIZABETH DEPREY, Associate Editor

ROCKY HILL, Conn., and ST. LOUIS – A combined ATG Rehab and United Seating and Mobility will have a whopping 124 locations in 39 states, but there may be room for further growth, say company execs.

"It would be very aggressive, but I wouldn't rule it out," said Cody Verrett,



P. Bergantino

vice president of sales and marketing for ATG Rehab.

Following the merger, announced Jan. 3, ATG Rehab President Paul Bergantino will become president and CEO of the new company, with USM President Bob Gouy taking the position of executive chairman of the board.

MERGER SEE PAGE 20