



■ Coated catheters shouldn't be lumped together with other intermittent catheters, says Dr. William Blank. **See page 11.**



■ **Product Spotlight:**  
This month we feature mobility products like the AL915 Universal Mobility Bundle from Harmar. **See pages 25-26.**

**HME  
NEWS  
POLL**

■ How does revenue mix break down for providers today vs. five to 10 years ago? Are they shifting away from Medicare toward retail and e-commerce? **See results on page 31.**

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# HME News

THE BUSINESS NEWSPAPER FOR HOME MEDICAL EQUIPMENT PROVIDERS

## NEWS

■ CMS briefs lawmakers on bidding program. **PAGE 4**

## SMART TALK

■ This month, our columnists tackle documentation, email. **PAGES 12-13**

## EXCELLENCE



■ ThedaCare's Randy Lutz says improving operational efficiencies "boils down to simple things." The provider took third place in the 2013 HME Excellence Awards. **PAGE 10**

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■ Alpine expands into Idaho. **PAGE 16**

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### VENDORS

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# Group seeks fix to frenzy of audits

BY LIZ BEAULIEU, Editor

A NEW COALITION led by a long-time industry health-care attorney and former White House and Health and Human Services (HHS) advisers has made audit relief its singular priority.

The Medicare Appeals Due Process Coalition will work on behalf of HME providers to reform the appeals process for audited and denied claims.

"It's important to get differ-

ent types of providers together and raise their voice with CMS and Congress to see if we can get this fixed," said Jennifer Summa, a senior policy adviser for Baker Donelson and a former senior adviser to CMS Deputy and Acting Administrator Leslie Norwalk. "You need to have numbers to be heard."

Summa is joined by Stephen Azia, counsel at Baker Donelson; Lance Leggitt, chairman of the firm's Health Care Government Affairs Practice Group



Lance Leggitt



J. Summa

and a former senior health policy advisor to George W. Bush; and Nancy Johnson, a former member of Congress and chairwoman of the Ways and Means Health

Subcommittee.

The coalition has two goals. The first: Work with CMS to find a way to expedite the appeals process. By law, an ALJ must conduct a hearing within 90 days, but the Office of Medicare Hearings and Appeals (OMHA) announced recently that it would defer assignment to the ALJs up to 28 months.

"There has become a feeding frenzy in terms of audits and denials, and it has jammed the

**FRENZY** SEE PAGE 29

## Liberator moves to Big Board

*Company trades on NYSE under ticker symbol LBMH*

BY THERESA FLAHERTY, Managing Editor

STUART, Fla. — Liberator Medical got listed on the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) in November, a major milestone for the company, say analysts.

The listing should give the company a shot in the arm, they say.

"It can take advantage of opportunities to grow the business and perform for a greater number of shareholders," said Jonathan Sadock, managing partner/CEO of Paragon Ventures. "It will be interesting to see how the public markets value the company going forward."

Liberator Medical started trading on NYSE on Nov. 20 under the ticker symbol LBMH, and stopped trading on Over-the-Counter Bulletin Board. On Dec. 4, its stock was trading at \$3.21.

Mark Libatore founded Liberator Medical Supply after

**LISTING** SEE PAGE 23



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## Race to help

NASCAR race car driver Danica Patrick was on hand for the donation of a wheelchair to Gerard Materiale at Homestead-Miami Speedway in November. The wheelchair is one of many donated by injured driver Darryll Gwynn's foundation and provided by Doral, Fla.-based DMR Corp. **See story page 19.**

## MONEYLINE

# Apria sells infusion biz

BY THERESA FLAHERTY, Managing Editor

LAKE FOREST, Calif. — Apria Healthcare has repositioned itself as a respiratory-focused company with the sale of its home infusion business, Coram, to CVS CareMark, say analysts.

"My guess is that they perceive themselves as pretty well-positioned for a world of lower reimbursements and fewer competitors," said Rick Glass, president of Steven Richards & Associates. "They have scale and run an efficient business."

The \$2.1 billion deal, announced Nov. 27, allows Apria to reduce debt and focus on its

**APRIA** SEE PAGE 29

## Brightree buys MedAct Software

BY LIZ BEAULIEU, Editor

ATLANTA — Fresh off his acquisition of MedAct Software, Brightree President and CEO Dave Cormack says the pace of consolidation among software companies is only going to increase.

Brightree's acquisition of MedAct in November is the company's second this year and its fifth since 2008. The other acquisition this year:

**BRIGHTREE** SEE PAGE 28