

Quick Guide:

Avoid Medicare Same or Similar Claim Denials

1. Verify

- **All providers should enroll in their respective DME MAC provider portal.** Once enrolled, a provider can access the DME MAC provider portal to gain information about any DME product which has been previously provided to a specific patient. A code range can be entered which covers all codes between L 1900 and L 4631 which are the Same or Similar lower extremity braces.
- The websites for the 4 DME MAC regions are:
 - For DME MAC JA: <https://med.noridianmedicare.com/web/jadme/topics/nmp>
 - For DME MAC JD: <https://med.noridianmedicare.com/web/jddme/topics/nmp>
 - For DME MAC B and C: <https://mycgportal.com/mycgs/>

2. Follow the Richie SOS Flow Chart: Consider your best option

3. Empower your patient

- The patient should telephone Medicare using the phone number on the back of their card.
- The patient should request that their file with Medicare be updated with **a specific request for coverage of a new or replacement lower extremity brace** based upon medical necessity.
- This action earmarks the pending claim as legitimate and not part of a fraud scheme.

4. Document the medical necessity

- Any information received on the DME MAC provider portal regarding previous brace coverage should be saved in the medical record of the patient.
- In the event that a new brace needs to be dispensed on the same extremity within 5 years, the medical record should stipulate the necessity based upon a new diagnosis or the fact that the previous device may have been lost, stolen or irreparably damaged (due to a one time event)
- Or the current brace may not be addressing the patient's needs due to progressive deformity, significant change in weight or change in anatomy resulting in the previous device being unusable by the patient.
- The medical record should clearly review the previous medical condition for the original brace and the new medical condition necessitating a different brace.

5. Appeal and Advocate:

- When a claim is denied by Medicare based upon a Same or Similar determination, the denial can be appealed
- Medicare policy clearly states that a new brace can be provided within 5 years of a previous brace if the medical condition has changed. The medical record is critical to the appeal
- This appeal is initiated with a request for redetermination. Providers can obtain a redetermination form from their DME MAC website provider portal. The form may be downloaded, completed and then scanned. The form can then be uploaded to the portal with all pertinent information from the patient medical record.