

Impact assessment of the measure

In addition to prices that are too high at the time of purchase, it appears that certain medical devices, in particular some wheelchairs that are bought, are not used very much after all, generally because they do not correspond or no longer correspond to the person's needs (this is the case in particular with rapidly evolving illnesses, certain changes in living environment, death, etc.). These wheelchairs, which often have many technical components, cannot currently be reused, which raises issues both in terms of ecological footprint and the efficiency of health insurance expenditure. Conversely, for example, in Germany, standard wheelchairs are on average reconditioned two or three times in order to be reused by another person. Devising a system for reconditioning wheelchairs would make wheelchairs that are already referenced and in use accessible to new patients, ensuring that they are in good working order, at a lower cost, and reducing co-payment charges.

Proposed measure: allow certain reconditioned medical devices to be covered by health insurance

The medical devices included in the list of products and services are covered by health insurance in two ways: purchase of new products or rentals. The final acquisition of devices after they are purchased does not allow them to be reused when they are no longer useful to the patient (due to the progression of the disease or disability, children growing, death, etc.). The measure introduces healthcare guidelines for reconditioning certain medical devices, to ensure that this is carried out in accordance with all the necessary health security conditions. The reconditioning of medical devices will only be possible for a limited list of devices drawn up under conditions laid down by a decree referred to the Council of State for its opinion. The measure also allows reconditioned medical devices to be covered, where such reuse is appropriate. In order to promote the reuse of the devices concerned, the measure also introduces a commitment by insured persons to return the device when they no longer have use for it, as well as the possibility of asking the insured person to pay a deposit, to create an additional incentive to return a medical device which no longer serves their needs and can be reconditioned. In order to ensure the traceability of these medical devices, they will be identified by a unique code and any maintenance or reconditioning work will be logged in an information system called 'Registration of the official circulation of medical devices' (ECO-DM).

This measure will facilitate access to certain medical devices for which there are currently high patient co-payment charges, such as wheelchairs. It will also contribute to reducing the environmental impact of the devices concerned.