

## **Take Action to Improve Access to Home Blood Pressure Devices Ask Lawmakers to Sign a Letter to CMS**

In an effort to make self-monitored blood pressure (SMBP) devices accessible to Medicare beneficiaries, Rep. Joyce Beatty (D-OH) and Rep. Robin Kelly (D-IL) are leading a congressional [sign-on letter](#) to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) requesting that SMBP devices be classified as durable medical equipment (DME).

ABC members can support this effort by asking their representative to sign the letter.

Reps. Beatty and Kelly are leading the letter at the request of the ABC and with the support of the American College of Cardiology and the American Heart Association.

CMS has said patients do not use SMBP devices in a way that leads to immediate self-treatment, a criteria for DME designation. ABC and other organizations have countered SMBP devices empower patients to make immediate lifestyle and medication changes to improve their blood pressure and in a manner that is consistent with Medicare's coverage of DME.

To send a strong message to CMS, it is important other members of the U.S. House of Representatives join Reps. Beatty and Kelly as signatories on the letter. Please take a moment before July 14 to ask your representative to sign the letter.

Follow these steps for contacting your representative:

1. Go to [house.gov](http://house.gov) and enter your zip code in the upper right-hand corner to look up your representative.
2. Once you navigate to your member of Congress' website, look for information on how to contact your representative by email.
3. Compose your email message using the following template:

On behalf of the Association of Black Cardiologists, I request that [\[insert name of representative\]](#) sign a letter to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) requesting that self-monitored blood pressure devices be classified as durable medical equipment (DME).

Hypertension, also known as high blood pressure, affects more than three million Americans each year and is the single largest modifiable risk factor for cardiovascular disease.

The burden of hypertension falls disproportionately on the Medicare population and communities of color. Roughly 55 percent of all Black Americans have hypertension — and more often severe hypertension — and by age 55, more than three in four will develop it.

To prevent harms associated with hypertension, among the basic starting points is putting SMBP devices in the hands of Medicare beneficiaries with high blood pressure. With access to SMBP, individuals can make immediate lifestyle changes on their own to improve their blood pressure based on readings obtained at home.

Improving access to SMBP devices requires that CMS classify them as DME. I respectfully ask that you lend your voice to this important health issue by signing a letter being circulated by Rep. Joyce Beatty and Rep. Robin Kelly. To co-sign this letter, please use the [Quill link here](#) by COB Thursday, July 25, 2024. If you have any questions, please contact Casey Davison in Rep. Beatty's office at [Casey.Davison@mail.house.gov](mailto:Casey.Davison@mail.house.gov).

Thank you for your consideration of my request.