

Reasons for Decision:

AP1516-03-0684

The appellant appealed that the appellant's disability assistance was denied, the appellant's income assistance was insufficient, and the appellant was denied funds for a Transcutaneous Electrical Nerve Stimulation (TENS) machine.

At the hearing the appellant clarified that the disability benefits and the appeal about insufficient amounts are related as the appellant cannot have a good quality of life on regular general assistance funds. The appellant had been denied in <date removed>, and has submitted new medical information since the appellant filed the appeal which has not yet been reviewed by medical panel. The chairperson ruled that as the appellant did not appeal the original decision in <date removed>, the appellant should wait until a new decision is made, and then file a new appeal at that time if disability benefits are not granted.

With respect to the TENS machine, the appellant provided a prescription from a doctor in <date removed> for a TENS machine for home treatment of <text removed>. The request was denied at that time. The appellant subsequently saved up the money needed to purchase the item and provided the worker with a receipt for <amount removed> and requested reimbursement.

The worker sent the request to the Disability Health Support Unit who denied the request. The appellant was sent a decision letter which stated that, "Based on the information provided in your Medical Equipment Request and Justification Form, your request has been denied."

The appellant stated at the hearing that the appellant does have health coverage with <another insurer> and had requested that the TENS machine be paid through the <text removed> health benefits, but was denied. The appellant stated that since getting the machine the appellant uses it once or twice a day every single day and experiences temporary pain relief which allows the appellant to function. In particular the appellant uses it before going to bed, and it relaxes the appellant and the appellant is able to fall asleep. Using the TENS machine has also allowed the appellant to reduce the use of T3's.

After carefully reviewing the written and verbal information the Board has determined that the appellant should be entitled to reimbursement for the funds the appellant spent on the TENS machine. The machine allows the appellant freedom from pain, improves mobility and reduces the appellant's reliance on pain medication. The Board also found it quite compelling that the appellant had managed to save funds from the appellant's general assistance benefits in order to purchase this item to give credibility to the fact that this was indeed an essential health need. Therefore the decision of the director has been rescinded and the Board orders that the appellant be reimbursed the cost of the TENS machine in the amount of <amount removed>.