

Between January, 21, 2022 and March 21, 2022, the Colorado Cross Disability Coalition gathered the following stories via on [online story collection system](#).

Below are the collected stories regarding problems with DME supply companies providing and completing repairs in a timely manner.

Recently, on Christmas Eve my tilt actuator broke, and I knew I had an emergency. With it being the holidays, I figured it would be tough to get a response for a few days, but I tried anyway. I called someone and continually let them know how urgent this was as I either had to be rolled around in bed all day or risk pressure sores by sitting up in my chair. I had no luck, but I figured I would be able to at least get an emergency response within a few days. I've had some experience with this before and I figured somebody could at least rig the wires together temporarily before the parts were replaced. I made many phone calls over the next few days and left several voicemails with management letting them know how urgent this was because I could get pressure sores. I never received a call back from anyone. No one showed any concern. Finally, a few days ago – I want to say 1/17/2022 – I received a call from one of their technicians who said he was on his way if I still needed some help. The fact that this took 3 1/2 weeks is unacceptable! Luckily, I am not dumb, and I contacted Action Seating and Mobility at the beginning of the year, and they were able to schedule something right away. But the fact that Nu Motion did not even have the concern to return a phone call is very disturbing!

After the airlines destroyed my power chair, it took three months to be replaced. I was fortunate enough to have an old power chair that I could use in the interim but there could be no adjustments to make it fit. While the new chair continued to be assembled, I had to make the choice to either be bedbound or to use a chair that lacked the basic trunk support and hip alignment to keep my skin healthy. I ended up with a sore that required surgery and kept me down an additional month. Numotion's unwillingness to work with the airline to make even minor repairs and adjustments to the old chair to keep me healthy while the new chair was being built was the direct cause of my skin breakdown and need for surgery in my opinion. And all medical bills we're paid by my insurance when they could have been avoided altogether.

Had a flat tire. new innertube was \$6 on Amazon. NuMotion wanted to replace both wheels at a cost of \$300 to Medicaid and 6-8 weeks to get them. Got the innertubes in 2 days but they would

not install them. Went to Action, they installed them but it took 4 weeks! No idea what they charged Medicaid.

My lift needed a new battery. Accessible Systems is the only servicer in CO who will work on that make and also accepts Medicaid. Took 8 weeks. A year later it totally broke down. Could not even get them to return calls or schedule someone to come work on it. Finally fixed it myself as I used to be a service tech.

Three points:

- Numotion - took 4 months and charged \$500 for a button that allows Bruce to power his wheelchair. Without it, he is stuck in bed. Got it overnight mailed from Ebay for about \$20 (2020). It plugs into a box like as it is phono plug like headset for an old phone.
- Rocky Mt. Medical - insisted that Medicare only approved half of his hospital bed. Yup - didn't bring the ends that keep the bed up. Made a fuss and they brought the rest of the bed. Otherwise he would have slept in his wheelchair (2020).
- Aspen Seating - created a seating system that cause sores on his sides and told us that we were positioning him wrong (after 20 years of positioning him correctly). Took advocacy calls to the CEO to allow us to create a whole new system - that works well for him with no sores (2020).

After months of discussion (NICU PT @ CHCO), we ordered a KidKart from Numotion in 12/2019, anticipating discharge of our trached/vented/GJ dependent child later that winter. Discharge date 2/11/20, which was clearly and repeatedly communicated to NuMotion and TD Schenck, who assured us they'd either have our stroller or a loaner. The day before discharge, TD brought a very different stroller, with enormously long handle, no O2 holder, no place for vent nor feeding pump. He expressed surprise that we had that equipment, despite numerous verbal and written orders listing all of it. Hanging the LTV vent on the handlebars as he suggested immediately tipped the whole thing over. He had nothing else to offer us 'on such short notice,' so we went home with a KidKart that CHCO loaned us instead. It then took until July 2020, nearly 8 months after ordering, to get our actual stroller. Numerous calls, emails, and texts to NuMotion, if returned at all, all indicated that the problem was our doctor failing to sign the necessary

documents. Asking the doctor directly, he said he had gotten NuMotion's paperwork months ago, signed it within days and returned it. After months and months, I tried a different phone number (probably one provided by another parent in a FaceBook group) and got a NuMotion employee unfamiliar with our order. Which was a blessing, since she actually LOOKED at the file, and within minutes determined that NuMotion had sent an incomplete list to our doctor, who had signed what they gave him, then NuMotion realized they had omitted many line-items that needed signatures -- so they added those items, but NEVER GAVE THE AMENDED FORM BACK TO THE DOCTOR. It sat with NuMotion, with a status indicating it was awaiting Dr. signature, for months due to both their initial error, and also the failure of at least 3 different employees to actually investigate to find it. Once this new person discovered the oversight, and took steps to send the correct form to the doctor, he signed it and we got the stroller within a month. And 2 weeks after we got this brand-new stroller, for which NuMotion billed \$14,000, and which we had waited 8 months to get, a cable broke. The cable that controls the seat-tilt mechanism. Because it is designed with a piston-assist to balance the weight of the seat, when this cable fails, it becomes impossible to lock the seat-tilt mechanism in place. So any time my toddler leaned forward in his seat, the seat itself lurched forward forcefully. We always used the seatbelt, otherwise it would have ejected him face-first -- bad for any kid, particularly bad for a kid whose ventilator circuit is secured to the stroller. NuMotion took about a month to send someone to assess the problem, another month or so of wrangling with the manufacturer (who, they said, refused to cover under warranty, and NuMotion said many times that they were covering the cost of the repair themselves). Then a tech came back to replace the broken cable, but had the part for a different model (incompatible). Another month later, they said the correct part had arrived, I asked multiple times if they had checked and confirmed that it was the correct part and was promised it was. When the tech arrived with this 2nd part, it was the same wrong part, and when I asked why he had personally assured me, himself, that he had confirmed it was right, he said he didn't expect the manufacturer to make the same mistake twice. The 3rd time it was the correct part, and he did replace it. That same part broke again a year later, as well as the wheel-lock being damaged. A different tech remotely (by camera) assessed the cable and wheels, ordered parts, and successfully repaired the cable first try. They also brought new wheels, only to discover that in addition to the wheels being damaged, the stroller side of the lock mechanism was also damaged. At this time, I am using the loaner that NuMotion brought us after the first repair fiasco over a year ago, which also has a broken cable but no in a dangerous way so I just tuck the cable into a pocket instead of it being mounted. "Our" stroller sits in my garage, with wheels that cannot securely lock, so I can't put this 150lb stroller on any slope, which means I can't use it. I have tried messaging through NuMotion's portal to inquire about the status of the locking cable order, which the tech assured me he would place promptly, without reply. Also no replies to several voicemails. At this point, I've essentially given up, and am mostly waiting for our toddler to outgrow the stroller and switching to a wagon or something. Separately: during the initial order process, when our child was 9 months old, we asked many, many, many times about growth adjustment, knowing that it's legally classified as a wheelchair, meaning we only get one every 5 years. TD personally assured me they're built for growing children, manufactured with expansion and adjustment in mind, and we'd have no problems. We had this conversation numerous times. When the stroller was being delivered for the first time, and the tech adjusting it

mentioned that some adjustments we were basically maxing out already, I asked how that's possible if it is built to last 5 years. The tech said that none of their strollers will ever last that long, maybe 2-3 at the very most. I protested that we were promised it would last, and he replied that it's ok, because as long as NuMotion signs a form attesting that he's outgrown the stroller, then Medicaid would approve a new one. Given my experience, I will take extra measures to ensure that NuMotion is not able to bill such exorbitant fees on our behalf ever again. I did try working with other companies in the area, and National Seating was very friendly and helpful, but needed a serial number, which Sunshine (mfgr) printed on a sticker positioned where the ventilator hooks on, so the printing was rubbed off completely. This is clearly not NuMotion's fault, and NuMotion did provide me a serial number upon request.

We have 4 children who use DME. We have 4 wheelchairs, 2 standers, 1 activity chair and 1 sleep safe bed. The huge issue is that for us to get an appointment for the company to come out we first must have a dr script requesting the assessment, growth modification and/or repair. Then it is often up to 2 weeks from that when we can get an appointment. After they come out, it takes at least 2 months from then, often longer (we've been waiting on the bed repair for 3 months now) for them to even order the parts or equipment. Part of the struggle is for new equipment or significant repairs we have to have a face to face appointment with Dr saying they need the equipment. Even if this patient already had the equipment and just has gotten bigger with growth. Then it goes to the company's funding department which takes weeks. Then it goes to prior authorization and since we have Tricare as primary then Medicaid that takes longer too. And since the DME company won't take a chance on something not being covered they will not order until prior authorization is in for both insurance companies. Then we wait the month to 3 months for ordering when we finally get to make final appointment to receive repair or new equipment. It's a never-ending time frame that is frustrating especially when your child out grows a wheelchair. One time we had a broken break and it took over 3 months to get through the above process in the meantime my disabled child was constantly at risk of rolling the chair back on transfers.

My son had hip surgery in July. He was given a chair that does not provide any support to his core, so we had to prop him up in pillows in the chair and it was very unsafe for him. As he recovered from his surgery, he gained a lot of weight and the hardware in his hip meant he could no longer fit in his pre-surgical wheelchair. He was fit for a new wheelchair and new seat as soon as possible. This process began in late August, and he still doesn't have his new chair. He is sitting in an ill-fitting chair that was so kindly lent to us by another parent in the group, but it is exacerbating his scoliosis and hip pain, and since it wasn't built for him, the plastic hurts his skin.

But it's the only chair we can use that will allow him to sit up and interact with his world. He has lost so much over these 6 months. We can't travel long distances because the chair is so uncomfortable, he gets tired so easily, his hips have become more windswept, it's just been so horrible for him. The delay was caused by the processing of Medicaid.

I am a quad with severe skin issues. My tilt went out and no repair was available for weeks, so my handyman fixed it piecing things together from my backup chair. He got it working but I still wanted a full repair. More than 2 weeks they come out and say they need to order a new motor; they do and install it. They insist on taking it to the shop leaving me in bed. When they returned it to me, I was in bed and cannot see behind the chair. When I try to use the chair, it still does not work. No one is available to deal with it and my handyman looks at it and sees a wire is clearly visibly broken., Not sure if that happened during the repair or if the new motor was never needed, just that wire needed to be soldered. He repaired the wire. When I tried to report this, I was bullied by vendor saying that I had destroyed a warranty. I had never been given a warranty. I repeatedly asked what warranty I had destroyed and never got an answer. They then said they would not do any further repairs on this new tilt motor even though Medicaid had paid for the repair. had I not had my handyman fix the chair I would have been left in bed for weeks, likely causing a pressure sore which would have cost more than \$500K for Medicaid to fix. This is not even considering that I have a full-time job and would not be able to continue this job if I was not able to sit up. They showed no concern and continued to blame me. I did have to pay for all of the labor out of pocket and I know most PWD are not able to do this

This was in April 2020 Today's Numotion (wheelchair repair company) conversation:

Me: the reset button on my husband's wheelchair is broken.

NM: we can send a person out to assess the button on April 22.

Me: its broken - what's to assess? It's a button. AND if my grandchildren can't come in the house, you certainly can't!

NM: I will transfer you to a technician to remotely assess the button. I get transferred - after being put on hold.

NM: What seems to be the problem with the button.

Me: Its broken. When you push it, nothing happens.

NM: Can you download an app so we can assess the button?

Me: No - I am not downloading your app on my phone. You push the button - nothing happens.

NM: Can you send me a picture?

Me: Of the button, you installed and replaced twice. It's a button! I send them a picture of the button. It's an oval, black button - looks like any other black button. So now they will submit it to

Medicare; get denied after 30 days; submit it to Medicaid and order it after it gets approved in another 30 days; then make an appointment 3 weeks out to "install" it - you plug it in to a box. I am sure that Numotion will charge Medicaid about \$500 for the process. And Bruce will sit in bed for 3 months. I am ordering one off Ebay. Argh! Fortunately, this girl was raised by an engineer, and I have "McGwyvered" a fix with duct tape and a screwdriver.

I have a shower chair that has been nothing but issues with the breaks not working at all and it's just so unsafe for me to transfer in and out of the shower chair by myself without assistants the shower chair will move with every transfer I make either to bed or to wheelchair

NM says that Permobil will not sell controllers to clients, only to dealers and will void a warranty if they found out a customer had a controller. NU also told me insurance (Medicaid) does not pay to fix older backup chairs which is untrue. NM employee says everything we do is ran by Medicaid. Including when we eat lunch. Also just took 4 weeks to get a repair of an on/off switch that was making the chair unsafe

I kept having a malfunction on my joystick where it would just scroll when I would tilt. It I whacked it the problem would eventually resolve. They changed the wire that did not solve it. They ordered a joystick, that did not solve it (and took 6 months to get it). Eventually a tech went through the programming, and we learned there was some feature that was turned on in the original programming that was causing this magnet in a switch to cause the problem. For years this feature has been known as drive lockout or DLO -- after a ton of hassle and multiple calls the tech guy from Rocky Mt finally was told the code and what to do. Had we been given the code with the chair this would have saved a ton of time of mine and Rocky Mt medical staff.

In May of 2021 my wheelchair was damaged by an airline. The specific issue was damage to the grip coating on my power assist wheels, the wheels were fully functional. I was assured by numotion that they were equipped to handle the issue and that it was a simple issue where the rims needed to be replaced. 3 weeks later when the parts arrived and the tech arrived at my

home to replace the parts it was immediately clear that he did not know how to do repairs on the type of wheels I have had he repeatedly told me "I don't know why they didn't just order you new wheels, we don't do this kind of thing". Over an hour later after the replacement of the grips we discover that the wheels were no longer functional and were in a persistent error code making them inoperable and the wheelchair non-functional, as a direct result of the "repairs" numotion made. I was assured that a tech from the wheel company could come out the following week to look at them and fix the error code, and was left with other, less safe, mobility aids for the next several days. The tech came out the following week and was unable to fix the wheels but I was asked if they could take my chair to the shop, I agreed but insisted I needed a comparable loaner chair (ultralight chair with power assist wheels) because this is an "atypical setup" (their words) it took several days for them to get me power assist wheels from their Boulder location again leaving me with unsafe mobility aids. Two weeks later, I receive a call from a PT at their office who informs me that he has come across my case while looking for the wheels that I had out as a loaner and is going to fix the numerous errors in my case to this point. Within two days new wheels had been ordered, within a week and a half I had my own functional wheels on my chair. All in all this ordeal took approximately 3 months, over half of that time I was relying on forearm crutches and the other half I was relying on power assist wheels that were not calibrated for my use, both of which resulted in numerous injuries, decreased mobility and independence, and limited my ability to work. It is also worth noting that this is the first and last time I have worked with Numotion for my mobility needs as a result of horror stories like this, ASAM and West Peak Mobility have both been nothing but wonderful during numerous repairs.

Our daughter was 3 years old and starting to get too big for her crib. I contacted NuMotion in February 2021 and had our assessment done March 2021. I anticipated it would take a couple months because I know the insurance process can take a bit as well as them having to build the bed. When the assessment was done we were told that Medicaid would likely approve a clear top so a monitor could be seen through the top of the bed as well as a second opening toward the foot of the bed (We were ordering a Haven bed from Beds by George). I hadn't heard anything from NuMotion so I followed up a month later as I was instructed to do. I followed up on April 12th to find out if they needed any more info from me and to find out where they were at in the process. They replied quickly and told me that they needed information from Hazel's PT. I contacted her PT and she said nobody from Numotion had reached out to her. Once they had Stephanie (PT) was calling them to find out what they needed on the Letter of Necessity but she couldn't get anyone to call her back. That eventually got worked out and then there were issues with the insurance company. It was now June and I was just being informed that the insurance company was saying Hazel wasn't covered. I understand that the insurance not approving something is not a fault of Numotion but the issue is that I wasn't informed of this until 4 months after we had done the evaluation. We finally got the insurance debacle figured out a month later toward the end of July. The equipment was finally ordered in August. In September I received a

call that Medicaid would not be covering the clear panel up top or the additional opening at the end of the bed and it would be \$700 out of pocket. I told them I didn't have an extra \$700 so to just give us what Medicaid paid for. Numotion contacted the manufacturer and the bed had not produced yet so they said it wouldn't be a problem. Finally, 7 months later we get the call that they are going to deliver the bed on October 4, 2021. They get here and assemble the bed and after it is assembled I go into the room and the bed has the clear top and the extra opening at the foot of the bed. I told the person installing that I had been contacted and told Medicaid wouldn't cover those items and he said that the information he had was that \$700 of the bed was customer pay. I told him that was not the case, and his response was "sorry that means we have to take the bed apart and take it with us". I told him to hold on and that I was going to call TD. I called TD and he said he was aware that I called and said that we only wanted what Medicaid would cover and it was a mistake on their end and he would eat the cost. It was honestly a terrible process. I understand that when it comes to Medicaid and insurance and denials that things take time and I was prepared for that but the lack of communication was crazy. Also, the lack of compassion by the person who did the install was pretty terrible. As a special need parent we have enough difficult things to go through. We don't need extra hoops where there doesn't need to be any or any more lack of compassion than we already receive. Don't get me wrong, we love the bed and it has been great for our daughter but the process was grueling. It shouldn't be that hard to make sure my daughter has a safe place to sleep.

My current story is that my joystick randomly turned off (this was last August) and in trying to get my chair repaired I was able to get a new joystick, but they forgot the wire to attach it and I have yet to receive that wire this February. Luckily I had a backup joystick and wire that work so I am okay ish. .. I am happy to go into detail about this story along with many more there is possibly one in 2018 that I have but please contact me by phone to do so, preferably on a Friday.

My mother has been gone now for nearly 4 years. She used a power chair for independence but was too elderly to understand the ins and outs of handling it. She just could not grasp how to troubleshoot when the chair got stuck, turned itself off, or just wouldn't turn on at all, causing her anxiety attacks. There were a couple of occasions when the chair just went into lock mode (we do not know why), while she was in a transport van to her dialysis treatments. When this happened, neither she nor the driver knew how to get it out manually. I was called to help. There were other occasions when this would happen and no one was around to help, someone would need to go get her and she had to leave her chair. With no one in our family with a vehicle to bring the chair, we would need to find a person to actually get it home. One time she didn't want to bother anyone

or leave it and when this happened, she had a bad "bathroom accident" that caused her butt wounds - which she still had when she passed away. She had been under the care of the Porter Wound Clinic and home nurse visits. She had been getting treatment for many months. There was a time when she was waiting for her transportation to go for dialysis, she had fallen out of her chair. I heard a lot of dog commotion/barking and when I got up to see what was happening, she was face down on the floor screaming which I could not hear because of the dogs barking. I ran to turn off the chair. One of the front tires had been rolling on one of her legs. She could not reach the button to turn it off and her purse strap was causing the control lever to make the chair's wheels to turn. It cut her leg which had to be treated. I cannot recall how long that wound took to heal, but it was a long while. Getting NuMotion to come service the chair when it continued to have issues was a chore in and of itself. When someone finally would come, we were told parts needed to be ordered and to get the parts approved and replaced sometimes took weeks to do. One time a loaner chair was brought to her, but it was for an extra-large/tall person. My mother was 4' 11" and just melted into it. So we just had to have her use her cheap Walgreens fold-away chair until her own chair was brought back to her. It was so hard for her to do because she depended on her power chair to be her legs and she did not want to "burden us with more" she would say. I can go on with more, but I no longer have my momma, what good can come of it for her...while I know there are others who have experienced awful service, that has caused either physical or emotional pain for them as it did for us, I'd like to know when the system is going to get better? Someone needs to fix it - but who cares enough to do so!? Apparently, those who run the system do not have loved ones who have gone or are going through it - so no one is in a hurry to help!

I am a quadriplegic and have little upper body strength. A manual wheelchair is inappropriate for my needs; however, Medicaid rules deny any maintenance on my "backup" motorized chair. If my primary chair breaks down (which it does frequently), I have to rely on my backup chair to carry on my activities of daily living. It generally takes at least two months to get repairs made - first schedule an appointment for a tech to do an evaluation of needed repairs (usually takes several days), next get approval from my primary insurance company (takes several weeks). Once approved, parts are ordered (can take a couple of weeks) and, finally, a tech comes out to do the needed repairs. This is the procedure if all goes well. Other times I've been denied service from Numotion because I acquired my primary chair from one of their competitors before Numotion bought them out.

He got a new wheelchair approximately three years ago. His chair prior to that has totally deformed his body, curvature of the spine leans over to the right over arm rest. He was not able to sit in the new chair for more than a day or two at time. I cannot keep him in it he is constantly sliding out of it he's uncomfortable he complains about his butt and back hurting it did nothing to fix the problems we had with his old chair (same issues even worse). When he slides out It stretches his catheter tight under his leg rest and leaves him laying on top of his leg rest screaming in pain, I have to get the bag from under the chair out, which pulls it even more, then I have to maneuver a 220 pound 6'2" man off of the leg rest while scraping his back on the footplates to the floor, roll him over to put a draw sheet underneath him, drag him from living room to bedroom to his ceiling lift to be put back in the chair (I'm 67 years old) His legs are too long and do not sit on the leg rest they sit on top of foot plates with his ankles resting on the sharp metal edge after numerous times of having repairs done nothing ever gets resolved still have the same problems so we went back to the old chair which is falling apart and deforming his body even more. Lots of other problems but too lengthy to put it here. Had SEVERAL repairs done with NuMotion and Rocky Mountain and still nothing has changed very frustrated my son is uncomfortable every day and we fight this wheelchair constantly and I'm tired of fighting this fight.

My mother is now gone but she had many issues with DME. I wrote earlier about her powerchair problems but did not mention bed problems. The bed she needed was denied because we were told she already had one. That is untrue, as the bed we had was for my nephew who was bed/chair bound due to his illness of Huntington's Disease at home. He passed years before my mom. She finally did get a bed and when it arrived and assembled, it was very old and sometimes worked when we had to lift or lower some part of it. Later, she required an air mattress due to the skin breakdown. The "blowup" mattress needed was finally delivered by (I think UPS, cannot recall now). We didn't know how to install it and It took some time for a tech to be sent to show us how to. We had less than desired time to learn how to work it the electronic thing they put at the foot of the bed was too technical for us and the vendor could only send out techs during their time availability. My mom's home care assistant was not able to be present and she was the one who needed to see it - for helping my mom in/out of it. We had to go with what was available - when the mattress was finally on, the thing would deflate without reason and my mom laid on a hard metal frame. We took the blow-up thing off and put on a regular mattress as her needs were not being addressed. We got tired of being given the shaft and people blamed others - vendor blamed Medicaid, Medicaid blamed someone else - always a vicious cycle. RESOLUTION NEEDS TO BE FOUND - PWD ARE PEOPLE WHO LOVE AND LIVE LIKE PEOPLE WHO ARE NOT DISABLED. WE/THEY HAVE RIGHTS!!!

I initially was unable to schedule a fix to my manual wheelchair frame with NuMotion despite recognizing a crack in the frame. I tried contacting the wheelchair manufacturer on my own. They wouldn't help me without a visit and approval from NuMotion. When I called again, my appointment was set for several weeks later. Not long after calling, my frame broke, and I was without a wheelchair for two weeks. While this happened, I was employed full time as a para for students with disabilities and had to make significant adjustments at my job during that time. This happened in September of 2016.

I ordered parts for my power wheelchair Permobil f5 in April 2021. The parts are critical to the operation of my chair (joystick). I heard nothing until November 2021. In November I received a call stating the parts were on backorder from the manufacture due to supply chain issues, and they would call when the parts got in. In January I decided to go to a new vendor and placed a call to NuMotion their repair department gave me attitude for canceling the order and asked if I wanted to send the parts back to the vendor.

The slow progress in getting repairs or replacement parts of all equipment is NuMotion passes on the blame to the dr office for the Rx or they blame Medicaid approval. They require video of the problem before even coming out and sometimes it's hard to take a picture of the issue that will help get the repair done.

Hi I have cerebral palsy and I depend on a power wheelchair when it comes to NuMotion service and repair I had to talk to management and address that I would like to have one specific technician only