



Get Educated, Get Enrolled NMHA's Medicare Rx Benefit Campaign

October 13, 2005

Welcome

The National Mental Health Association is a leading voice in ensuring that the scope and implementation of the Medicare Rx benefit meets the needs of beneficiaries with mental health disorders, particularly those who are dual eligibles. To help consumers and advocates with the approaching enrollment period, NMHA has created the “*Get Educated, Get Enrolled*” Medicare Rx Benefit Campaign. As part of the campaign, we will send out regular email bulletins with program updates and new resources. Please forward the bulletin to others in your community and encourage them to subscribe by emailing shcrinfo@nmha.org.

Countdown

2 days until dual eligible auto-enrollment notification (October 15, 2005)

32 days until enrollment begins (November 15, 2005)

59 days until the new prescription drug benefit begins (January 1, 2006)

Important Notice!

Notice of Error in “Medicare & You 2006” Handbook

CMS released a [statement](#) that there is an error in the area-specific versions of these handbooks, which have been mailed to Medicare beneficiaries this month. Page 97-A begins a series of charts listing drug plans. The last column in these charts is titled “If I Qualify for Extra Help, Will My Full Premium Be Covered?” Due to an error, this column lists “YES” for every prescription drug plan. Approximately 60 percent of the drug plans should be listed “NO.” (If limited income Medicare beneficiaries who receive Extra Help choose a plan with a higher than average premium, they will be responsible for the difference in cost.) CMS does not plan to send out notices of the error or a correction to beneficiaries, but is instead relying on its partners and the drug plans themselves to correct the mistake when working with beneficiaries. Corrected electronic versions of the handbook are available [here](#) and the Plan Finder Tool will contain correct information.

If you are doing education and enrollment events in your community, please alert consumers to this error!

Tools You Can Use

Webcast on Plan Finder Tool

CMS will host a webcast on their new Plan Finder Tool on Friday, October 14, 2005, 2:00 PM EST at <http://cms.archivevideo.com/>. The webcast is accessible through Windows Media Player and Real Player. *Additionally, we have learned that CMS will launch the Plan Finder Tool at www.medicare.gov on Monday, October 17, rather than today as originally planned.*

"Help is Here" Resource Kit: Understanding, Deciding, Choosing, Joining CMS' toolkit to aid advocacy partners in helping to explain the drug benefit and help individuals choose and enroll into a drug plan.

Spanish Language Materials Available

CMS and the Social Security Administration have some Spanish language fact sheets geared toward Medicare beneficiaries that may be helpful in outreach.

- *Extra Help* materials: <http://www.ssa.gov/organizations/medicareoutreach2/>
- CMS/Drug Plan materials: <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/partnerships/tools/materials/default.asp#resources>

In the Community

- [MHA in Delaware](#) is partnering with a local church to conduct a community training session on October 26.
- The [MHA in New Jersey](#) is planning two workshops for consumers on October 27 and November 1.
- In addition to a training on October 13, the [MHA in San Francisco](#) is planning at least three additional Medicare Rx education events for consumers on November 1, 7 and 8.

If you would like to share local activities in your area, please [email us](#) and let us know what events you're organizing. You may also post your event at <http://www.nmha.org/calendar/>

In the News

Medicare Delays Start of Program to Compare Plans

The Miami Herald – Oct. 12, 2005

...Medicare.gov is postponing its big rollout that was scheduled to allow comparison shopping starting Thursday...

Medicare Drug Plan Sales Offensive Begins

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette – Oct. 11, 2005

Whether it's TV ads featuring stars from bygone years or commission-hungry insurance agents camped out in pharmacy stores, the marketing of Medicare prescription drug plans this fall promises to be big business...

Medicare Expands Efforts to Fight Fraud

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (Press Release) – Oct. 7, 2005

Medicare will employ new techniques and collaborate closely with law enforcement to stand on the side of consumers as the enrollment period for prescription drug coverage nears ...

Get Educated, Get Enrolled e-bulletin is a project of the [National Mental Health Association](#), the country's oldest and largest nonprofit organization addressing all aspects of mental health and mental illness. To subscribe, email us at shcrinfo@nmha.org. For further information on the Medicare Rx benefit, go to <http://www.nmha.org/medicare>.