



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

December 16, 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 enrollment, 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](mailto:shcrinfo@nmha.org).

### **Countdown**

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

**138 days until the end of the initial enrollment period (May 15, 2006)**

### **Tools You Can Use**

#### **NMHA Medicare Rx Website Update!**

NMHA's Medicare Rx [website](#) includes the following new resource:

- [Key Questions to Ask \(en espanol\)](#) – Now available in Spanish, NMHA's basic fact sheet consists of questions for consumers to ask when reviewing and choosing a Medicare prescription drug plan.
- **Coming Soon: NMHA's Medicare Rx Consumer Workbook in Spanish.**

#### **Medicare Rx Coverage Workbook for Mental Health Consumers**

The NMHA Medicare Rx Consumer Workbook is helping thousands of Americans with Medicare enroll in the new Medicare prescription drug program. To obtain copies:

- Individuals may request a free copy of the workbook through the [NMHA Resource Center](#), 1-800-969-NMHA(6642);
- Download the PDF version at [www.nmha.org/medicare](http://www.nmha.org/medicare); or
- Order larger quantities to share with Medicare beneficiaries by contacting NMHA's bookstore at [publicationsales@nmha.org](mailto:publicationsales@nmha.org) or 703-838-7534.

#### **Medicare's Plan Finder and Online Enrollment now available in Spanish!**

The Medicare Drug Plan Finder and Online Enrollment web tool is available in Spanish. You can link to it from the [English version](#) or access it [here](#) directly.

#### **Dual Eligible Transition and new Point of Sale Mechanism**

CMS announced special provisions to ensure the smooth transition of dual eligibles into the Medicare prescription drug benefit. A new Point-of-Sale protection plan for dual eligibles was outlined in the same [fact sheet](#) to ensure that all dual eligibles get enrolled into a drug plan if they fail to get auto-enrolled. CMS has contracted with [WellPoint](#) to enroll dual eligibles into

one of their Medicare drug plans once they are determined eligible by CMS vendor [Z-Tech](#). A [FAQ](#) is also available to explain these new policy changes.

### **New Privacy Act FAQs**

Individuals working with beneficiaries to access plan information are now required to provide the beneficiary's last name, date of birth, Health Insurance Claim Number, and the effective date of Part A or Part B. New Frequently Asked Questions regarding the Privacy Act may be accessed at the QCM database under QCM Documentation:

[https://www.qcmscores.com/documents\\_only.asp?\\_privacy\\_call=true](https://www.qcmscores.com/documents_only.asp?_privacy_call=true) (Please note that the website is experiencing technical difficulties and the FAQ link may not always be available).

### **Kaiser Family Foundation Briefing: "Insights on Transitioning From Medicaid to the New Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit: A Conference Call Briefing"**

The Kaiser Family Foundation is hosting a conference call on Monday, December 19, 2005 at 12:30 pm E.T. to discuss findings from a focus group of state Medicaid officials and highlight profiles of dual eligibles to help describe how they are experiencing this transition. The conference call-in number is 1-866-818-1395. Background materials will be available [online](#) at 12pm E.T. on December 19.

### **CMS Webcast: "Help is Here: Practical Tips for Counseling People with Medicare about Prescription Drug Coverage"**

This CMS webcast initially aired on Wednesday, December 14, 2005 at 2:00 PM EST and is now available to view anytime. The webcast includes three typical counseling sessions to guide counselors in helping people understand, decide, choose, and join a Medicare Prescription Drug Plan. To access the webcast, go to <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/partnerships/news/mma/webcasts.asp>. The accompanying ["Help is Here" Resource Kit](#) is available online to aid advocacy partners in helping to explain the drug benefit and help individuals choose and enroll into a drug plan.

### **The ABCs of Part D: Helping Consumers Access the Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit**

Now available online, this handy daily reference guide will assist direct service staff in helping consumers make informed decisions about their new prescription drug coverage. Go to [www.nccbh.org/SERVICE/Bookstore/ABCs.htm#abcs](http://www.nccbh.org/SERVICE/Bookstore/ABCs.htm#abcs) to download now and to obtain four hours of CEU credit.

### **In the Community**

- The [MHA in North Carolina](#) will host an information session on the Medicare prescription drug benefit on Thursday, January 26<sup>th</sup> from 7:00 – 9:00 PM at St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Raleigh, MHA in Wake County. The program is free and open to the public and is designed for family members, consumers, and others in the mental health community. To register, email [jfurst@mhancmail.org](mailto:jfurst@mhancmail.org).
- The [MHA in New York State](#) has developed a website to provide vital Medicare information and resources to New York residents. <http://www.medicarepartdnys.org>
- Starting in January, the [MHA in Delaware](#) will tour the state providing Medicare information and workbooks to community mental health centers across the state.

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**

### Seniors Not Told of Drug 'Bridge'

L.A. Times – Dec. 12, 2005

Nearly 1 million poor and frail California seniors who will be transferred automatically into the Medicare prescription program Jan. 1 can get transitional help from the state...no one has notified those eligible of the state's policy — which provides up to a 100-day supply of medicines they are currently taking, including expensive name brands — and they only have until Dec. 31 to request and receive the medication.

### Poor Not Buying New Drug Benefit Yet

Boston Globe – Dec. 7, 2005

The Social Security Administration says it has approved just 661,000 applications for a subsidy that makes the new drug benefit much more affordable for low-income senior citizens and the disabled...

*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](mailto:shcrinfo@nmha.org). For further information on the Medicare Rx benefit, go to <http://www.nmha.org/medicare>.