



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

December 2, 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

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

152 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:

- [Medicaid Coverage of Benzodiazepines and Barbiturates](#) – a chart indicating which state Medicaid programs are continuing to cover these medications for dual eligibles after Medicare Part D goes into effect on January 1, 2006.

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; or
- Order larger quantities to share with Medicare beneficiaries by visiting [NMHA's bookstore](#).

My Medicare Matters – Find Enrollment Events in Your Area

The National Council on the Aging (NCOA) and the Access to Benefits Coalition (ABC), with support from AstraZeneca, have developed a new website, <http://www.mymedicarematters.org> to teach seniors and dual eligibles about Medicare prescription drug coverage and how to enroll into a drug plan. The partnership plans to hold education and enrollment events in 27 states.

Find further information about these events at

<http://www.mymedicarematters.org/People/Calendar/index.asp>.

Medicare Today Enrollment and Education Events

Medicare Today is hosting hundreds of events across the country to assist people with Medicare in joining a plan. Some of these enrollment events are large community-wide events where

Medicare Today representatives and volunteers from the community will be on hand to assist beneficiaries one-on-one with enrollment. Find an event in your area here:

<http://www.medicaretoday.org/index.php?src=gendocs&link=Partner%20Program%20Lookup>
(When attending any enrollment event, beneficiaries are reminded to bring: (1) their Medicare ID card, (2) a complete list of their current prescriptions (including dosages and frequencies), and (3) the name and address of their preferred pharmacy

CMS Dual Eligible Transition Website

CMS has collected its documents on dual eligibles transitioning from Medicaid to Medicare drug coverage and placed them in a [single location](#). To find all of CMS' materials related to dual eligibles visit <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/medicarereform/states/> and click on "transitioning dual eligibles."

CMS Dual Eligible Transition Fact Sheet

CMS has released a fact sheet outlining current activities to successfully transition dual eligibles into the Medicare drug program (see attached). The fact sheet outlines protections already in place and identifies several new levels of protections, including: specially trained operators on the 1-800-Medicare phone line, automatic eligibility checks and coordination of benefits in pharmacies, and point of sale protections to ensure that if individuals arrive at the pharmacy and have not been autoenrolled, they will receive the appropriate medications and will be enrolled from that point forward.

Dual Eligible Notice from State Medicaid Agency

All duals eligibles will soon receive (or have already) a Notice of Action from their State Medicaid Agency about the upcoming discontinuance of most of their Medicaid drug coverage. The state agency is legally obligated to provide this Notice. CMS has issued a [suggested template](#) for the letter.

Guide for Helping People with Disabilities Navigate Part D

[*Understanding Changes in Prescription Drug Coverage for People with Disabilities on Medicare*](#) by Georgetown University Health Policy Institute and Advancing Independence provides materials to help Medicare beneficiaries with disabilities navigate the new Medicare prescription drug benefit. The guide provides answers to common questions and worksheets that beneficiaries can use to compare and select prescription drug plans.

In the Community

[National Mental Health Association](#) - On December 7, 2005, NMHA will present a Medicare Part D workshop to over 200 stakeholders from Maryland's public mental health community. at the Case Management Conference at the University of Maryland

[Mental Health Association of Tennessee](#) - in partnership with the Medicare Access Network of Tennessee, the MHA will sponsor our second enrollment event on Wednesday, December 14, 2006 at three locations simultaneously. The Public Library of Nashville, the Davidson County Library Branch and the Pruitt Branch.

The MHA of Tennessee will also provide an education session for the Bethlehem Center of Nashville, Seniors Program Participants on Monday, December 5, 2005 and another for Matthew Walker Comprehensive Health Center on Tuesday, December 13, 2005 for staff and Medicare recipients.

[MHA of Greater St. Louis, Missouri](#) – will host two trainings on Medicare Part D in December. The first will be held at ADAPT in St. Louis on December 6, 2005, and the second will be held at the Burrell Center in Springfield, MO on December 7, 2005.

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 Offered Subsidized Drug Coverage in Error](#)

Boston Globe – Nov. 23, 2005

About 9,000 Massachusetts senior citizens could benefit from an error that resulted in their receiving misleading information about the new Medicare prescription drug program.

[To Err is Human, But Can We All Forgive These Mistakes?](#)

Center for Medicare Advocacy Weekly Alert – Nov. 23, 2005

Advocates...have received a steady stream of communications from beneficiaries regarding problems with the www.medicare.gov Personal Plan Finder, the Formulary Finder, 1-800 Medicare, and the 2006 *Medicare & You Handbook*. Beneficiaries should be aware of the issues outlined below when trying to select a Part D plan...

[CMS Alerts Consumers to Formulary Glitch For Required Medications](#)

Mental Health Part D website News Alert – Nov. 22, 2005

During its first phase of quality assurance (QA) monitoring of prescription drug plan (PDP) formularies, CMS has identified several formularies that do not contain all the required medications.

[Dual Eligibles Could Fall Through the Cracks](#)

Knight Ridder Newspapers – Nov. 18, 2005

Some of the nation's oldest, sickest and poorest people could find themselves without drug coverage on New Year's Day if their transition into the new Medicare prescription drug benefit doesn't go smoothly.

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>.