



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

August 12, 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

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

95 days until enrollment begins (November 15, 2005)

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

Tools You Can Use

NMHA Medicare Rx Benefit Materials

The National Mental Health Association has developed tools for local Medicare education including Frequently Asked Questions for beneficiaries and policy leaders, and a consumer-oriented workbook to aid in plan enrollment, and exceptions and appeals. Visit www.nmha.org/medicare to access these and other valuable resources.

Benefits Check Up Rx is a web-based service by the National Council on Aging and CMS to help individuals apply for a variety of public and private benefit programs that help to lower the cost of prescription drugs, including the Medicare Rx Benefit's Extra Help, Medicaid, and state pharmacy assistance and patient assistance programs. The tool screens individuals for eligibility in these programs and then links to electronic application forms. Learn more at www.BenefitsCheckup.org/rx

The National Access to Benefits Coalition (ABC) works to ensure that Medicare beneficiaries get signed up for the new Medicare Rx benefit and Extra Help available to limited income beneficiaries. ABC is holding an August training session via teleconference to provide practical guidance on selecting and implementing cost-effective and efficient practices for community-based enrollment activities. The session will be offered twice:

Monday, August 22nd 2:00-3:30 EDT

Tuesday, August 23rd 1:00-2:30 EDT

To register, email barbara.shaheed@ncoa.org or call (202) 479-6987. Please specify the date you would like to participate in the training.

Extra Help Toolkit for Advocates

The Access to Benefits Coalition recently released a [toolkit for advocates](#) undertaking community activities to help Medicare beneficiaries enroll in the Extra Help program. The toolkit offers a list of Frequently Asked Questions regarding Extra Help, a sample application, information sheets on how income and assets are counted, as well as copies of award and denial letters. To access the toolkit, go to www.accesstobenefits.org

The [National Community Pharmacists Association](#) is sponsoring a series of “Medicare Rx Forum” Town Hall meetings across the country. Attend the meeting in your area to find out more about Medicare Rx and pharmacy-specific issues. Future forums include: St. Louis (8/14), Raleigh NC (8/17), Omaha (8/18), Detroit (8/21), Anaheim (8/21), Seattle (8/23), Birmingham, AL (8/24), Kansas City, MO (8/25), Miami (8/28), Dallas (8/31), Minneapolis (9/8), Houston (9/11), NYC (9/15), Columbus (9/15) and Foxwoods resort, CT (9/16). Sign up for the meeting in your area at www.medicareresourcecenter.com

In the Community

- The [Tennessee Mental Health and Substance Abuse Coalition](#) is hosting an educational forum on August 23rd.
- [MHA in Indiana's](#) ombudsman is partnering with the state Medicaid agency to train the state's Medicare call-in center staff.
- The [MHA of Greater St. Louis](#) has planned two community trainings in August and September targeting community stakeholders including consumers, providers, and case managers.
- Advocates from the [MHA of Southeastern Pennsylvania](#) shared training materials with the mental health agency to educate the provider community.

If you would like to share local activities in your area, please email us and let us know what events you're organizing.

In the News

[Medicare Drug Premiums Will Be Lower Than Expected](#)

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (press release) – Aug 9, 2005

...Medicare prescription drug coverage that begins January 1 will have an average monthly premium of \$32.20, about \$5 less per month than previously estimated ...

[Informed Decisions Launches Program to Assist Beneficiaries with ...](#)

Business Wire (press release) - San Francisco, CA

... firm, has launched Beneficiary Centered Enrollment (BCE), an innovative program designed to educate Medicaid beneficiaries on their Medicare Part D options.

[Medicare Rx Education Network Launches Effort to Educate About New ...](#)

U.S. Newswire (press release), DC - Jul 19, 2005

The Medicare Rx Education Network was launched today at a press conference in Washington, DC The network of 40 national ...

[Attorney General's Advisory on Telephone Scams Targeting...](#)

Massachusetts Attorney General (press release) - Boston, MA ,USA

... financial or medical information over the phone in connection with either the Medicare Drug Discount Card program, or the Medicare Part D drug benefit that ...

[Kroger offers education for Medicare drug benefit](#)

Cincinnati Business Courier - Cincinnati,OH,USA

... Efforts include assisting customers in the application process and training pharmacy staff to answer customers' questions about the Medicare Part D program. ...

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