



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

September 9, 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. The goal of the campaign is to educate and enroll one million individuals living with mental health disorders who are eligible for the Medicare Rx benefit. As part of the campaign, we will send out regular email bulletins with program updates and new resources. If you are interested in receiving the e-bulletin, please subscribe by emailing shcrinfo@nmha.org if you have not yet done so. Please forward the bulletin to others in your community and encourage them to subscribe as well.

Countdown

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

67 days until enrollment begins (November 15, 2005)

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

Important Change!

Change in Enrollment Periods for Partial Benefit Dual Eligibles

Until now, **only the full benefit dual eligibles** were allowed to switch plans at any time after the drug benefit begins on Jan. 1, 2006. CMS has announced that Medicare Rx beneficiaries enrolled Medicare Savings Programs (MSPs) (QMBs, SLMBs, and QI-1s), also known as partial benefit dual eligibles, will **now have a Special Enrollment period (SEP) identical to that given to full-benefit dual eligibles**. This means they can enroll in, disenroll from, or change prescription drug plans in any month. (Please note that this change does not affect Medicare beneficiaries who receive SSI but not Medicaid.)

Tools You Can Use

New! NMHA Medicare Rx Benefit Materials

NMHA's Medicare Rx website has been updated with many new materials including:

- PowerPoint presentations for conducting education events in your communities, and
- Consumer-oriented fact sheets and materials.

Bookmark www.nmha.org/medicare to access these and other valuable resources. And stay tuned for further updates, including state-specific resource lists for Medicare Rx information.

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: 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

Upcoming CMS Distance Learning Opportunities

Tentative schedule of webcasts on the Medicare Rx benefit:

September 28 – Overview of Medicare Rx Coverage and Information

October 5 – Medicare Rx Coverage Enrollment Process

October 12 – Using the Medicare Rx Plan Finder Tool

October 19 – Ask the Experts (Session I)

November 2 – Ask the Experts (Session II)

For more information, see <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/partnerships/news/>

Social Security Follow Up Calls

As part of its effort to reach all people who qualify for the extra help, Social Security has contracted with NCS Pearson, Inc. and its partner, West Corporation, to conduct follow-up telephone calls to individuals who have not responded to the initial mailing of the application. To read more about this process, including how to identify such a call and ensure that it is not a scam, please read <http://www.socialsecurity.gov/prescriptionhelp/vendorfollowup/factsheet.htm>

New CMS Fact Sheet on *Protecting Yourself from Identity Theft and Fraud*

A new fact sheet from CMS on [Medicare Rx and Protecting Your Personal Information](#) is now available. To access the fact sheet, as well as other documents, go to <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/medicarerereform/factsheets.asp>

In the Community

- The [Mental Health Association of Southwestern Ohio](#) is planning many informational sessions, including three on Sept. 27, 28, and 29, for service providers to learn about the Medicare Rx benefit, so that they can eventually do online enrollment at planned sessions later this Fall.
- The [National Mental Health Association of Greater Los Angeles](#) is planning a front page article on how the Medicare Rx benefit will affect dual eligible clients in the Fall issue of their newsletter, *Next Step News*. The newsletter has a circulation of 3,500 readers.
- On September 12, the [MHA of Central Florida](#) will hold its first Medicare Rx presentation for consumers and caregivers at a local peer support group.
- The [Mental Health Association of Illinois](#) will conduct an educational training for mental health providers, advocates, consumers and family members on October 17 at the University of Illinois-Chicago.

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 Drug Plans Offer Premiums of \\$20 Per Month or Less, Lower Deductibles, Enhanced Coverage Also Available](#)

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (press release) – Aug. 29, 2005

...At least one prescription drug plan with premiums below \$20 per month, and in some areas significantly below \$20, in every region of the country ...

[Low-Income Seniors to Save Nearly \\$1,500 a Year Under New Medicare Rx Drug Coverage, Analysis Shows](#)

Medicare Today (press release) – Aug. 25, 2005

The amount of money that low-income seniors spend on prescription drugs will fall nearly 90 percent under Medicare's soon-to-be-implemented prescription drug coverage, a study released August 25 shows.

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