

WASHINGTON BUREAU · NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE
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ISSUE BRIEF

DATE: November 18, 2005
TO: Concerned Parties
FROM: Bruce Gordon, NAACP President & CEO
Hilary O. Shelton, Director, Washington Bureau

NAACP Urges All Medicare Recipients to Look Into New Medicare Drug Coverage

Medicare will start providing insurance for prescription drugs on January 1, 2006. Everyone on Medicare (either Part A or Part B) can get drug coverage, regardless of income or health. Although participation in the program is voluntary and no one is required to sign up, if you sign up later than when you were first eligible you will probably pay a penalty.

To get coverage, you must sign up and choose one of the many private drug plans Medicare has approved. Available plans vary from state to state, and there are big differences in what each plan has to offer and what they charge in premiums, co-pays and deductibles, the drugs they cover and the pharmacies they use. You should have at least 27 different drug plans available to choose from, and potentially many more depending on where you live.

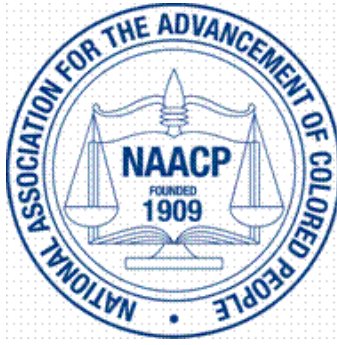
If you have a limited income and qualify for “extra help” you will pay very little for your prescription drugs. If you now receive Medicaid or SSI or if your state currently pays your Medicare premiums, you will pay no premium or deductible for Medicare drug coverage. Your co-pays for each prescription will be \$1 or \$2 for generic drugs and \$3 or \$5 for brand-name drugs. You may also qualify for the “extra help” program if your income is less than \$12,919 a year (\$17,320 for married couples) and you have assets of less than \$7,500 (\$12,000 for married couples). To see if you qualify for “extra help” you should call the Social Security Administration at (800) 772-1213 or go online to www.socialsecurity.gov. If your drug costs are very high, Medicare will pay 95% of your costs beyond a certain level in any one year.

To sign up you must enroll in one of the private insurance plans that Medicare has approved of. The enrollment period began on November 15, 2005; people currently on Medicare should sign up by May 15, 2006, to avoid paying a penalty. People who currently have drug coverage from current or former employers or from a union may want to investigate what Medicare has to offer, since it may be a better deal. Also, if you have other drug coverage that is at least as good as Medicare’s and you lose it at a future date, you will not pay a late penalty if you then enroll in a Medicare drug plan within 63 days of losing your coverage.

For more information about the new drug coverage program or how enroll, or for assistance in comparing the plans that are available to you, you can either go to www.NAACP.org or www.medicare.gov. You can also call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227) and 1-877-486-2048 for TYY. users.

MEMBERSHIP IS POWER! JOIN THE NAACP TODAY.

To become an NAACP member or to sign up for e-mail legislative and press updates, visit www.naacp.org



NAACP Medicare Part D Unit Partner Registration

In Partnership with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and the National Council on Aging, the NAACP Health Department is committed to assisting African American Medicare beneficiaries in enrolling for the Medicare Part D Prescription Drug Benefit. The NAACP is calling on its state and local units to assist in quickly and measurably educating Medicare beneficiaries with special emphasis on those with limited incomes and help them make informed choices about Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage. To become an official partnering unit and receive supporting materials and resources, please fill out the form below and fax it to (410) 585-1329 or email it to mpatterson@naacpnet.org.

Please indicate your level of commitment by checking the appropriate box(es) below.

Sign my unit up as an official NAACP Medicare Part D Partnering Unit

My unit would like to host a Medicare Education Enrollment event

My unit would like to receive educational materials to be distributed in the community

I would like to participate in the web-based training on Medicare enrollment on April 11, 2006 from 7:00 – 9:00pm

I am interested in all of the above.

Contact Person: _____

Unit Name: _____

Phone: () _____ Email: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Please contact Myisha Patterson, NAACP national health coordinator at 410-580-5685 or mpatterson@naacpnet.org should you have any questions.

African American Beneficiaries Who Are Not Enrolled-As of 3/31/06
(Snapshot Listed by State/County - in descending order)

	States	Part D Eligible	Not Enrolled or Claimed for RDS	% Not Enrolled or Claimed for RDS	Sample Counties <i>highest # of African Americans</i>
1.	Texas	272,872	94,332	34.57%	Harris (24,858); Dallas (15,012)
2.	New York	342,512	90,742	26.49% <i>(Manhattan)</i>	Kings (19,394); Queens (12,724) Bronx (10,951); New York (10,583)
3.	Georgia	249,752	84,794	33.95%	Fulton (15,379); DeKalb (10,487); Richmond (4,650); Chatham (4,523)
4.	Florida	274,786	76,999	28.02%	Miami-Dade (7,931); Duval (7,946); Broward (6,927); Orange (5,893)
5.	Virginia	175,359	76,203	43.46%	Richmond City (6,128); Norfolk City (4,840); Hampton City (4,530)
6.	Maryland	155,858	75,412	48.39%	Prince George's County (25,807); Baltimore City (22,252); Baltimore County (7,323)
7.	California	275,495	73,333	26.62%	Los Angeles (25,883); Alameda (8,100); San Diego (5,302)
8.	North Carolina	243,812	66,846	27.42%	Mecklenburg (5,676); Cumberland (5,083); Wake (3,847)
9.	Illinois	214,918	66,600	30.99%	Cook (53,428)
10.	Pennsylvania	162,843	63,208	38.82%	Philadelphia (35,917); Allegheny (7,647)
11.	New Jersey	132,998	51,561	38.77%	Essex (13,136); Union (5,048)
12.	South Carolina	156,802	48,136	30.70%	Charleston (5,610); Richland (5,498)
13.	Ohio	167,785	47,536	28.33%	Cuyahoga (14,534); Hamilton (7,163); Franklin (6,252)
14.	Louisiana	154,532	47,340	30.63%	East Baton Rouge (5,644); Orleans (5,162); Caddo (4,511)
15.	Alabama	167,331	46,982	28.08%	Jefferson (8,664); Mobile (5,276); Montgomery (4,296)
16.	Michigan	176,983	44,241	25.00%	Wayne (27,115); Oakland (4,473)
17.	Mississippi	133,972	36,289	27.09%	Hinds (5,466); Harrison (1,776); Washington (1,338); Jackson (1,324)
18.	Tennessee	108,682	28,907	26.60%	Shelby (12,406); Davidson (4,287)
19.	District of Columbia	50,572	27,424	54.23%	
20.	Missouri	79,361	25,259	31.83%	St. Louis (8,157); St. Louis City (6,883); Jackson (6,665)

Bold = # unenrolled in that particular county

21.	Indiana	62,612	23,291	37.20%	Marion (10,389), Lake (5,988)
22.	Puerto Rico	35,934	20,522	57.11%	San Juan (3,580); Carolina (1,820)
23.	Arkansas	55,333	17,453	31.54%	Pulaski (5,087); Jefferson (1,792)
24.	Kentucky	38,652	13,604	35.20%	Jefferson (6,211); Fayette (1,527)
25.	Connecticut	34,200	12,214	35.71%	Fairfield (7,318); New Haven (3,882), Hartford (3,463),
26.	Oklahoma	29,804	10,828	36.33%	Oklahoma County (4,285); Tulsa (1,891)
27.	Massachusetts	39,421	10,629	26.96%	Suffolk (4,644)
28.	Washington	19,663	8,995	45.75%	King (4,362)
29.	Wisconsin	30,811	8,266	26.83%	Milwaukee (6,355)
30.	Kansas	17,973	7,730	43.01%	Sedgwick; Wyandotte
31.	Colorado	17,347	7,318	42.19%	Denver, El Paso
32.	Arizona	20,192	6,553	32.45%	Maricopa
33.	Nevada	19,882	6,522	32.80%	Clark
34.	Delaware	19,007	6,049	31.83%	New Castle, Sussex, Kent
35.	Virgin Islands	9,678	5,820	60.14%	St. Croix, St. Thomas
36.	Minnesota	12,649	3,532	27.92%	-----
37.	West Virginia	9,293	3,270	35.19%	-----
38.	Nebraska	7,537	2,594	34.42%	-----
39.	Iowa	6,882	2,410	35.02%	-----
40.	Oregon	6,312	1,956	30.99%	-----
41.	New Mexico	4,405	1,683	38.21%	-----
42.	Rhode Island	5,411	1,659	30.66%	-----
43.	Alaska	1,482	668	45.07%	-----
44.	Hawaii	1,427	663	46.46%	-----
45.	Utah	1,262	582	46.12%	-----
46.	New Hampshire	894	410	45.86%	-----
47.	Maine	689	249	36.14%	-----
48.	Wyoming	399	203	50.88%	-----
49.	Idaho	403	184	45.66%	-----
50.	South Dakota	296	145	48.99%	-----
51.	Montana	280	140	50.00%	-----
52.	Vermont	301	94	31.23%	-----
53.	North Dakota	163	69	42.33%	-----

Relevant Medicare Part D Resources

Tools for Advocates

CMS Partner Center

http://www.cms.hhs.gov/Partnerships/01_Overview.asp#TopOfPage

Access to Benefits Coalition Toolkit for Advocates Assisting People with Medicare

<http://www.accesstobenefits.org/Helpful%20Resources/Tools%20You%20Can%20Use/documents/AdvocatesToolKit.htm>

CMS Partner Resource Center Line

1-866-445-7490

My Medicare Matters

<http://www.mymedicarematters.org/>

This web site is designed to help individuals learn more about the Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage. My Medicare Matters is also available on the ground in 37 cities across the nation. By logging onto this website you can identify Medicare enrollment events in each of the 37 cities or contact the My Medicare Matters team to coordinate an even with your unit.

Background

The Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit – Fact sheet

The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation

<http://www.kff.org/medicare/upload/7044-02.pdf>

Prescription Drug Coverage: The Basics (CMS)

<http://www.medicare.gov/pdp-basic-information.asp>

CMS Medicare Help-Line

(for those who need assistance enrolling or have questions)

1-800-MEDICARE

CMS Medicare Website

www.medicare.gov



MEDICARE PART D CONTACT SHEET

NAME (LAST, FIRST)	ADDRESS	PHONE	ENROLLED	EDUCATION*	REFERRED	NEED FOLLOWUP? (Y/N)

*** "Education" denotes that you distributed educational material to the individual or provided information about Part D.***



Community-Based Education Program



In-person help with your drug coverage questions is available.

Learn about the new coverage and how it may affect you and the cost of your medicines.

The new Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage has a lot to offer. In fact, the average person could save as much as 50% on prescriptions. But there's a lot to understand before you make your decision about enrolling. The National Council on the Aging and the Access to Benefits Coalition™ are sponsoring My Medicare Matters, a free, community-based education program. We are working with local community-based organizations and holding events near you, where you can learn about the new benefit and get personal help with your questions. You can assess your situation, understand your choices, and even sign up if you are ready.

Extra help for people with Medicare with limited financial resources.

If you qualify, you may be able to get extra help paying for prescription drugs. If you haven't already applied to the Social Security Administration, we can help you.

Find local event information in the Friday edition of your newspaper, or go to www.MyMedicareMatters.org or www.MiMedicareImporta.org.

My Medicare Matters is on the ground in:

ARIZONA

Phoenix

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

DELAWARE

New Castle

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Washington

FLORIDA

Ft. Lauderdale
Jacksonville
Miami
Orlando
Palm Beach
Tampa

GEORGIA

Atlanta

ILLINOIS

Chicago

INDIANA

Indianapolis

MARYLAND

Baltimore

MASSACHUSETTS

Boston

MICHIGAN

Detroit
Grand Rapids

MINNESOTA

Minneapolis

MISSOURI

St. Louis

NEVADA

Las Vegas

NEW JERSEY

Central New Jersey
Northern New Jersey

NORTH CAROLINA

Charlotte
Raleigh

OHIO

Cleveland
Columbus
Cincinnati

PENNSYLVANIA

Philadelphia
Pittsburgh

TENNESSEE

Nashville

TEXAS

Austin
Dallas/Ft. Worth
Houston
San Antonio

UTAH

Salt Lake City

VIRGINIA

Richmond
Norfolk

Sponsored by



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54 ABC Coalitions Nationwide

Local and state ABC Coalitions are working to educate and enroll lower-income Medicare beneficiaries in the Extra Help available through the new Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage, as well as public and private prescription savings programs.

CONTACT YOUR LOCAL COALITION.

Arkansas

Alzheimer's Association
Little Rock
(501) 265-0027

Arizona

Governor's Office for Children,
Youth and Families
Phoenix
(800) 432-4040

California

City of Los Angeles Dept of
Aging
Los Angeles County
(213) 252-3323

Council on Aging
Orange County
(714) 560-0424

San Bernardino County Dept of
Aging and Adult Services
Riverside/San Bernardino
(909) 891-3900

Consumer Center for Health,
Education & Advocacy
San Diego
(877) 734-3258

Senior Action Network
San Francisco/Oakland
(800) 434-0222

Colorado

Seniors Inc.
Denver
(303) 894-7552

Florida

Area Agency on Aging of
Pasco/Pinellas
St. Petersburg/Clearwater
Pinellas Cnty: (727) 217-8111
Pasco Cnty: (800) 861-8111

Florida

Area Agency on Aging of Central
Florida, Inc.
Orlando
(407) 228-1820

Area Agency on Aging of Palm
Beach/Treasure Coast
Palm Beach/Boca Raton
(888) 688-1211

Northeast Florida Area Agency
on Aging
Jacksonville
(904) 777-2106

West Central Florida Area
Agency on Aging
Tampa
(813) 740-3888 X514

Georgia

Atlanta Regional Commission,
AAA
Atlanta
(800) 669-8387

Iowa

Heritage Area Agency on Aging
Cedar Rapids
(319) 398-5559

Illinois

Area Agency on Aging for
Lincolnland
Springfield
(800) 252-2918

Area Agency on Aging of SW
Illinois
Belleville & St Louis, MO
(800) 326-3221

Suburban Area Agency on Aging
Chicago
(800) 789-0003

Indiana

Indiana Primary Health Care
Association
Indianapolis
(317) 630-0845

Kansas

Shepherd's Centers of America
Kansas City
(816) 753-7279

Kentucky

Green River Area Development
District
Owensboro
(800) 928-9094

Louisiana

The New Orleans Council on
Aging/SenioRx*
New Orleans

Louisiana Rural Health
Association
(Statewide)
(985) 369-3813

Massachusetts

Action for Boston Community
Development, Inc.
Boston
(800) 472-7299

Community Partners, Inc.
Amherst
(413) 253-4283

Maryland

City Commission on Aging and
Retirement Education
Baltimore
(410) 396-4932

* Due to the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, this coalition's efforts are temporarily on hold.

Maine

Legal Services for the Elderly
(Statewide)
(877) 353-3771

Michigan

Detroit Area Agency on Aging
Detroit
(313) 446-4444

Region IIIA Area Agency on
Aging
Kalamazoo
(269) 373-5173

Minnesota

Minnesota Senior Federation
Minneapolis-St. Paul
(651) 645-0261 X129

Mississippi

Mississippi Department of
Human Services
(Statewide)
(601) 359-4836

Missouri

Area Agency on Aging of SW
Illinois
St Louis & Belleville, IL
(800) 326-3221

Shepherd's Centers of America
Kansas City
(816) 753-7279

Montana

Missoula Aging Services
Missoula
(406) 728-7682

New Hampshire

New Hampshire Legal Assistance
(Statewide)
(800) 852-3388

New York

Medicare Rights Center
New York
(800) 333-4114

Nassau County Dept. of Senior
Citizen Affairs
(516) 227-8957

North Carolina

Office of Minority Health and
Health Disparities
(Statewide)
(919) 850-2715

Ohio

Ohio Association of Second
Harvest Food Banks
(Statewide)
(800) 648-1176

Cleveland Dept. of Aging
Cleveland
(866) 885-1650

Area Office on Aging of
Northwestern Ohio
Toledo
(800) 472-7299

Oklahoma

LIFE Senior Services, Inc.
Tulsa
(866) 664-9009

Oregon

Clackamas County Social
Services
Oregon City
(503) 655-8427

Pennsylvania

CARIE
Philadelphia
(215) 545-5726 ext. 233

Lackawanna County Area Agency
on Aging
Scranton
(570) 963-6740, ext. 2401

Rhode Island

RI Dept of Elderly Affairs
(Statewide)
(401) 462-0524

South Carolina

Lower Savannah Council of
Governments
Aiken
(866) 845-1550

Santee-Lynches Regional Council
of Governments
(800) 948-1042

Tennessee

Knoxville-Knox County
Community Action Committee
Office on Aging
Knoxville
(865) 524-2786

Texas

Alamo Area Development
Corporation
San Antonio
(210) 362-5307

Better Business Bureau
Education Foundation
Houston
(877) 468-9222

Dallas Area Agency on Aging
Dallas/Ft. Worth
(800) 548-1873

Utah

Salt Lake County Aging Services
Salt Lake City
(801) 468-2483

Virginia

Senior Services of Southeastern
Virginia
Norfolk
(757) 461-9481

Washington

Aging and Disability Services
Seattle
(206) 684-0699

West Virginia

West Virginia Primary Care
Association
(Statewide)
(304) 346-0032