



News For Older Americans

Making Medications More Accessible

(NAPSA)—There's good news for seniors about the Medicare Part D prescription drug program. It's exceeding expectations and providing tens of millions of people with unprecedented access to life-enhancing medicines. What's more, the benefit is costing taxpayers far less than originally projected.

According to a recent survey by the nonpartisan Medicare Today coalition, an overwhelming 84 percent of older Americans say they are satisfied with their individual plan and coverage. This is a nearly 10-point increase in just four years. The survey offers the latest evidence that seniors continue to see the drug program as a success.

The survey also found more than nine in 10 seniors report that their plan works well, is convenient, gives them peace of mind and makes them feel fortunate to have their coverage. In addition, more than 80 percent of seniors say their Part D premiums and co-payments are affordable, with 94 percent saying that their coverage gives them peace of mind.

Starting in January 2011, and as part of the recently enacted health care reform law, biopharmaceutical research companies will help close the coverage gap, or "doughnut hole," by providing a 50 percent discount on brand-name medicines for eligible seniors at the time they purchase their medicines.

Looking forward, the Part D drug benefit will continue providing seniors with access to affordable prescription medicines. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, which oversees the Part D benefit, reports that the average



Biopharmaceutical research companies can help close the Medicare "doughnut hole" by giving eligible seniors a 50 percent discount.

monthly premium will increase only a dollar by the end of 2011.

Open enrollment season for Medicare health plan and prescription drug plan beneficiaries begins on November 15 and runs until December 31. The annual open enrollment period lets enrollees change their existing plan or choose a different one. Making any changes, sooner rather than later, can help ensure that the drug benefit is in place before coverage starts.

For more information on the Medicare Today coalition and its Medicare drug benefit satisfaction survey, visit: <http://medicaretoday.org/>. To learn more about the Medicare Part D Drug Benefit open enrollment, visit www.medicare.gov/.

If you are uninsured and having difficulty paying for your prescription medicines, the Partnership for Prescription Assistance may be able to help. To learn more, visit www.PPARx.org or call (888) 477-2669.