

Good News Department

Helping Seniors Cover Prescription Costs

(NAPSA)—About 17 million of the 40 million Medicare beneficiaries in the U.S. do not have any prescription coverage. As a result, their illnesses—many of them life-threatening—go untreated.

Fortunately, a new program has been created to help low-income Medicare beneficiaries get needed prescriptions and better manage their health care.

Seniors who have a Pfizer Share Card can buy a 30-day supply of a Pfizer prescription medicine for \$15.

The card can be used at retail pharmacies and is available to Medicare recipients who have an annual gross income below \$18,000 or less than \$24,000 for couples.

The flat-fee prescription coverage program is designed to bridge the gap in drug coverage until broader Medicare reform is implemented. There is no enrollment fee.

The cost of prescription drugs is crucial for many older people because Medicare, which provides health insurance to all Americans over age 65, does not cover prescription drugs outside the hospital.

Many seniors get at least some of their drug costs paid, in some cases by joining a Medicare HMO or by buying supplemental coverage, but about 27 percent have no drug coverage.

Several drug companies have discount drug cards, but many of



An innovative new program has been designed to bridge the gap in prescription drug care coverage.

those charge seniors a modest fee, usually from \$12 to \$25 a year, in exchange for a discount. A recent government study found that savings from these cards are minimal for many of the most popular name-brand drugs.

The Pfizer drug card will be administered through the Pfizer for Living program, which will include a help line and educational materials for low-income seniors. Pfizer medicines most often used by Medicare recipients include the cholesterol-lowering drug Lipitor, Neurontin for acute epilepsy, Norvasc for high blood pressure and angina, and Zoloft for depression.

For more information, call 1-800-717-6005 or visit www.pfizerforliving.com.