

# Health Bulletin



## New Flexible Spending Account Program Makes It Easier to Save on Health Care Costs

(NAPSA)—Recent changes in tax laws allow increased health care savings for consumers with Flexible Spending Accounts (FSAs). A FSA account is a reimbursement account offered by an employer to an employee for health-related and other qualifying expenses, which are exempt from federal, state and payroll taxes. Many over-the-counter products, including pain relievers, first aid, oral care, eye care, cold remedies, allergy and sinus remedies, cough syrup, motion sickness tablets and antacids, can be paid for with pre-tax dollars thanks to a 2003 ruling by the IRS and Treasury Department.

In most cases, when purchasing health care and over-the-counter drugs, consumers must keep all receipts for qualifying FSA products and submit those receipts to their FSA program administrator for reimbursement. At year's end if the estimated amount declared is not used, the unused sum is forfeited by the employee.

A new offering from the nation's largest retail pharmacy chain makes it easier for customers to track health care spending and receive FSA reimbursement. CVS/pharmacy has launched an exciting new tracking technology through its ExtraCare card program, providing an easy and accurate way to track spending on eligible over-the-counter health care products.

CVS customers present the ExtraCare Card at the register when buying their over-the-counter health care items; all FSA program purchases will be categorized and tracked automatically. When cus-



**It may now be easier for people to track health care spending and possibly receive reimbursement.**

tomers visit [www.cvs/flex](http://www.cvs/flex) online, they can receive an e-mail detailing all FSA qualified purchased products. Once the summary has been received, customers can submit it to their FSA program administrator, eliminating the need to organize piles of receipts.

"The ability to track FSA spending is one of the many benefits the CVS ExtraCare card offers to our customers," said Helena Foulkes, senior vice president of advertising and marketing for CVS/pharmacy. "With 50 million ExtraCare card members this program provides our customers with a convenient, money saving incentive that can help ensure a better spent household budget."

Evaluating one's over-the-counter spending for a yearlong period can also be a valuable tool to determine FSA allotments for the coming year. According to AC Nielsen, the average U.S. household spends \$226 on over-the-counter health products.

Consumers may apply for an ExtraCare card at any of the more than 5,000 CVS stores nationwide or online at [www.cvs.com](http://www.cvs.com).