

Medicare News and Notes

The Best Help With The Medicare Prescription Drug Plan Could Be Online

(NAPSA)—No one missed the recent launch of the Medicare Prescription Drug Plan.

Countless newspaper and TV stories have chronicled the complex programs and the difficulties that many people have had finding the best plan to help them get the drugs they need.

However, many older Americans aren't using the detailed medical information available on the Internet. A recent study by the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation found that only 21 percent of American senior citizens have gone online to research health information, confirming that most elderly Americans are not using the Internet to become better informed about their health and health care options.

The TV Services division of Microsoft Corp. (<http://www.msn.tv.com>) has compiled a list of third-party online resources that seniors can use to find answers to their questions about the Medicare Prescription Drug Plan, including these sites:

- Medicare. The official government Medicare Web site now has answers to the many questions seniors have about the new Prescription Drug Plan. The site includes a Medicare Prescription Drug Plan Finder, an interactive tool that enables you to narrow your search for a Medicare prescription drug plan based on your personal preferences such as cost, coverage and convenience. Go to <http://www.medicare.gov/pdphone.asp>.



- AARP. AARP, the leading non-profit, nonpartisan membership organization for people age 50 and over in the United States, has designed a site with many articles and detailed information to answer your Medicare questions. Visit <http://www.aarp.org/health/medicare>.

- WebMD Inc. WebMD, the popular health information Web site, and the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation created a Medicare Drug Benefit Calculator to help seniors figure out what they will pay for prescriptions under the standard Medicare prescription drug plan. Visit <http://www.webmd.com/content/article/113/110712.htm>.

If you are a senior or you have an older family member who doesn't use the Internet because it seems too complicated, did you know there are easy-to-use and affordable devices designed to help you get online? With the MSN TV 2 Internet & Media Player (<http://www.msntv.com>),

you simply connect it to a regular television, plug in your phone line (for a dial-up connection) or broadband cable, sign up for MSN TV service, and you can be online within minutes, sending e-mail and researching valuable health and wellness information.

"Some Americans are still intimidated by technology and the Internet," said Kevin Mizuhara, director of marketing for the TV Services division at Microsoft. "Our customers love MSN TV 2 because it's easy to set up and doesn't require computer skills to use."

More important, the MSN TV 2 player is affordable for just about any budget. The MSN TV 2 Internet & Media Player sells for about \$200 MSRP (U.S., plus monthly subscription fee). And, if you order directly from Microsoft (1-866-901-4882), monthly payment plans are available. In addition, the MSN TV 2 player is available at many retailers including Best Buy, Circuit City and Amazon.com.

"With MSN TV 2, you can check e-mail and surf the Web via a regular television from the comfort of your living room," Mizuhara said. "And you can stay in touch with family and friends by sharing digital photos. With the rich resources available online, you can not only use the Web to research hobbies such as gardening, travel or genealogy, you can also find answers to almost any questions you may have about vital subjects such as Medicare, health, retirement and finances."

Note to editors: The MSN TV 2 Internet & Media Player requires a subscription fee to MSN TV service and is subject to acceptance of the terms of service upon registration. A credit or debit card is required to pay for MSN TV service. MSN TV services are available as a local call in most areas. In some areas, long-distance telephone toll charges may apply. To check local access, call (866) 901-4882 or visit <http://www.msntv.com>.