

Medicare Prescription Discount Card Now Available

As of June 1, 2004 savings on prescription drugs became available to Medicare beneficiaries under the Drug Discount Card program. NAMI recommends that Medicare beneficiaries shop around and take their time in selecting a card, as prices will likely come down as competitors for the first time view each other's online listings. Several tools are now available to help Medicare beneficiaries with mental illnesses – and their families – select the discount card that offers the deepest discounts for the specific medications they are taking.

Low-income Medicare beneficiaries (with income up to \$12,569 for singles and \$16,862 for couples) are strongly encouraged to sign up for the card and a \$600 annual credit. Several online resources are currently available for use and copy/distribution at www.medicare.gov.

NAMI also urges Medicare beneficiaries to use the Access to Benefits Coalition website – www.accesstobenefits.org – to search for other discount programs that may be available in your state and to ensure that any Medicare discount card purchased is coordinated with other discount and state pharmacy assistance programs.

Other valuable resources include:

- [Medicare-Approved Drug Discount Card Tip Sheet](#) – A good step-by-step guide for those who are helping beneficiaries to choose a card (2 pages).
- [Introducing Medicare-Approved Drug Discount Cards](#) – Brochure providing a general overview of discount cards and \$600 annual credit (4 pages).
- [Guide to Choosing a Medicare-Approved Drug Discount Card](#) – 36-page booklet providing more detailed information about discount cards, eligibility, how to choose and enroll, etc.
- [New Drug Price Comparison Information Available Now](#) – Price comparison tool showing which discount cards are available in a particular zip code, with comparisons of specific drug prices under each approved card (updated every Monday morning).
- [Drug Discount Card Enrollment Tip Sheet](#) – Step-by-step guide detailing how beneficiaries can enroll in for a Medicare-approved drug discount card once they know which card they want (2 pages).

Medicare beneficiaries should also consider calling 1-800-Medicare (1-800-633-4227) for more information or check here to find out if you qualify for a Medicare-approved discount card and the \$600 annual credit. In addition, contact information for your local State Health Insurance Counseling and Assistance Programs (SHIP) is available at www.medicare.gov/Contacts/Related/Ships.asp and click on your state in the drop-down box.