

# Getting ready for Medicare Part D

What is Medicare Part D? Beginning January 1, 2006, the Medicare program will expand to include outpatient prescription drug coverage. This new benefit will be known as Medicare "Part D". Medicare Part D will provide coverage for a variety of prescription drugs that have never been covered by the Medicare program before.

## What can you do to prepare?

1. Relax, you have plenty of time to make decisions.
2. Find two shoeboxes or large envelopes. Mark one "Important Letters" and the other one "Advertising". You will need to use this information to make an informed decision on what plan will be best for you.
3. Get an up-to-date list of medicines that you take. List the retail price and what you are currently paying for each medicine from your pharmacy.
4. Medicare prescription drug plans cannot begin marketing their products until October 1, 2005. By mail, you will receive information describing the prescription drug plans available in your area, along with their list of covered drugs (formularies).
5. Watch for letters, notices or information on statements regarding credible coverage for plans you may currently have. Credible coverage means that the plan is "as good or better than Medicare's Drug Plan."
6. You can join a prescription drug plan starting November 15, 2005 through May 15, 2006.
7. If you have questions, contact Rob Wilkinson, Medicare Part D Specialist at 758-8436 or your assigned benefit specialist. For those who live in Afton, Beloit, Brodhead, Clinton, Evansville, Hanover, Milton, or Orfordville contact at Terri Pass at 757-5414. For those who live in Janesville, Edgerton, Footville or Johnstown, contact Daryl Porter at 757-5942.
8. Other Helpful Resources  
Prescription Drug Helpline (Medicare Beneficiaries) 866-456-8211  
Helps Medicare beneficiaries with Medicare Part D and other prescription drug coverage. The Helpline can explain your drug coverage options, including costs, covered drugs and application procedures.

Wisconsin Coalition of Advocacy

800-926-4862

Helps Medicare beneficiaries who receive disability from social security with their Medicare Part D benefits.

Medigap Helpline

800-242-1060

Assist individuals with concerns about health insurance options, including Medicare supplements, Medicare Advantage plans, long-term insurance and group/employer health plans. Information compiled by Rock County Council on Aging, 51 S. Main Street, Janesville, WI 53545

# SELF-HELP INTERNET WEBSITES

1. [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov) -- The Official U.S. Government site for people with Medicare. Find available Medicare –approved drug discount cards, and compare prices for your prescriptions
2. [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov) -- The Official U.S. Government site for people with social security. Find information and apply for help with Medicare prescription drug costs.
3. [www.wismedrx.org](http://www.wismedrx.org) –Official site of CWAG (Coalition of Wisconsin Aging Groups). Find information on assistance with prescription drug costs.
4. [www.pparx.org](http://www.pparx.org) – Site of Partnership for Prescription Assistance. This site is for people who do not have Medicare and don't have prescription drug coverage and can't afford their medicines.
5. [www.BenefitsCheckUP.org/rx](http://www.BenefitsCheckUP.org/rx) – Official site of the National Council on Aging. Connect seniors to government programs that can help them pay for prescription drugs, health care, utilities, and other needs.

## **National Toll-Free Multilingual Helpline Center for MedicareRX**

The National Asian Pacific Center on Aging (NAPCA) has a National Toll-free Multilingual Helpline Center to assist Asian and Pacific Island (API) elders get direct bilingual enrollment assistance and access to translated information about the new Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit. If API seniors call this helpline, they can get language specific forms that help them determine eligibility. They can even get help from NAPCA staff completing forms over the phone. There are four toll-free numbers people can access, the following languages:

Chinese (Cantonese & Mandarin) 1-800-582-4218

Korean 1-800-582-4259

Vietnamese – 1-800-582-4336

English – 1-800-336-2722

Spanish – 1-866-456-8211