

What prescription drug benefits will I have now that Public Law 108-173, Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act of 2003, added prescription drug coverage under Medicare?

The most significant part of the new law is that it sets up an outpatient prescription drug plan under Medicare Part D that will begin in 2006. In the interim, there is a prescription drug discount card program that is expected to begin in June 2004 and be available until 2006. This card will be available for an annual fee and could cut your drug costs by 10 to 15 percent. There will be many companies that will offer the Medicare-approved card and benefits and discounts will vary.

For the most complete and updated information about the Medicare drug plan and discount card, contact the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services at 1-800-633-4227, or visit <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/medicarerereform/drugcard/>. TTY users should call 1-800-486-2048.

How will Medicare's prescription drug benefits affect my CHAMPVA prescription drug coverage?

We anticipate that if you apply and qualify for the prescription drug discount card under Medicare, the reduction of your prescription cost at the pharmacy will also reduce your cost share (co-payment) for the drug under CHAMPVA.

The potential impact of the Medicare Part D drug plan is not as clear. The law did not provide specific guidance on whether you can have coverage under both Medicare and CHAMPVA drug plans, or if you will need to choose between the two plans. Also, although the law states that those who do not enroll in Medicare Part D at their first opportunity will have to pay a penalty if they enroll later, it is not clear whether those who were eligible for CHAMPVA and chose not to enroll in the Medicare program will have to pay a penalty if they lose CHAMPVA eligibility and later apply for the Medicare prescription program. Guidance is needed from Medicare on issues such as these, and when we have this information we will be able to provide you with information on the impact the law will have on your CHAMPVA pharmacy benefits.

How do I get more information regarding Medicare's prescription drug plan?

You should contact Medicare at their toll free number at 1-800-Medicare (1-800-633-4227) for further information.

What are my current prescription drug benefit options under CHAMPVA?

The CHAMPVA pharmacy benefit provides excellent coverage and wide availability of services through the Meds by Mail program, the Medical Matrix network pharmacies, and your local retail pharmacy. Fact Sheet 01-24, Pharmacy Benefits, provides information on each of these programs.

How do I get more information about my current prescription drug benefits under CHAMPVA?

Ask for a copy of Fact Sheet 01-24, Pharmacy Benefits, when contacting CHAMPVA or print a copy of the fact sheet from our website.

- Mail: VA Health Administration Center
CHAMPVA
PO Box 65023
Denver, CO 80206-9023
- Phone: 1-800-733-8387 Monday-Friday
8:15 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. Eastern Time
- FAX: 1-303-331-7804
- E-mail: hac.inq@med.va.gov
- Website: www.va.gov/hac