



The Part D Prescription Drug Program: A Gamble for All Americans

The problem with the Part D Program: For the first time the government is not administering a benefit for people with Medicare directly, instead relying on private insurance middlemen to deliver drug coverage. These private drug plans do not cover all the drugs people need, charge high copayments for the ones they do cover and leave people with no coverage at all for months during the year. While traditional Medicare negotiates doctor and hospital rates and pays them directly, the Part D Program forbids the government from negotiating drug prices on behalf of people with Medicare. The Part D Program is a gamble for people with Medicare because there is now way to know that a plan will meet their needs today or tomorrow.

Medicare works: Medicare provides an excellent, cost-effective and affordable safety net, guaranteeing coverage of virtually all medically reasonable and necessary health care services. For 43 million Americans, traditional Medicare coverage meets their changing health care needs, giving older and disabled adults access to supplemental insurance, virtually all doctors and hospitals, and peace of mind.

The Part D program needs to be fixed: People with Medicare need a meaningful Medicare drug benefit, not a choice of private insurance plans offering limited drug coverage and not even guaranteeing that they will continue to cover the same drugs throughout the year.

What we need:

- A drug benefit administered directly by Medicare, without the waste and restrictions that come with private health insurers as middlemen;
- Negotiated drug prices that keep their cost reasonable and ensure their affordability;
- One decent drug plan that adapts to our needs today and tomorrow.

What you can do:

- Ask your Senators and Representatives to cosponsor the Medicare Prescription Drug Savings and Choice Act of 2007 (H.R. 3932 in the House and S. 2219 in the Senate) which supports these principles.
- Promote these solutions through an op-ed piece in the newspaper and in any groups with which you are involved.