

# What do I need to know about Medicare prescription drug coverage to help my homeless clients?

## Important information

- Medicaid prescription drug coverage is changing. The last day your state will pay for prescription drugs is December 31, 2005.
- Medicare prescription drug coverage is available to all people with Medicare.
- Coverage is not automatic for most people.
- There is extra help for many people with limited incomes and resources.
- The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) needs your help with informing persons who are homeless and eligible for this program about their options.

## Questions?

**Question:** How do I learn more so I can help my homeless clients apply for and choose a Medicare prescription drug plan?

**Answer:** To learn more about eligibility and helping your homeless client apply for Medicare benefits, visit FirstStep's Health Care Assistance page at [www.cms.hhs.gov/apps/firststep/content/healthcategory.html](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/apps/firststep/content/healthcategory.html) or visit Medicare.gov's Eligibility Tool at [www.medicare.gov/MedicareEligibility/home.asp?version=default&browser=IE%7C6%7CWinXP&language=English](http://www.medicare.gov/MedicareEligibility/home.asp?version=default&browser=IE%7C6%7CWinXP&language=English)

**Question:** Since prescription drug plans are offered based on zip codes, what address or zip code do I use for my homeless client when helping him or her find a prescription drug plan?

**Answer:** In the case of homeless individuals, a Post Office Box, an address of a shelter or clinic, or the address where the individual receives mail (e.g. social security checks) may be considered the place of permanent residence. In other words, you may help your homeless client by looking for prescription drug plans offered in the same zip code that he or she uses as a mailing address.

## Free Training Materials and Free Publications

To learn more about the Medicare prescription drug benefit, free training materials are provided:

- CMS offers case managers and outreach workers enhanced training about the Medicare program.
- The following website provides, in addition to enhanced Medicare training, a link to an Outreach Toolkit to Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage. Visit [www.cms.hhs.gov/partnerships/tools/materials/medicaretraining/default.htm](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/partnerships/tools/materials/medicaretraining/default.htm)
- Basic information explaining Medicare prescription drug coverage is available. Visit [www.medicare.gov/pdp-basic-information.asp](http://www.medicare.gov/pdp-basic-information.asp)



## Fact sheets are available for people with limited income and resources

- Quick Facts about Medicare's New Coverage for Prescription Drugs for Alaskans with Limited Income and Resources.  
[www.medicare.gov/Publications/Pubs/pdf/11105\\_AK.pdf](http://www.medicare.gov/Publications/Pubs/pdf/11105_AK.pdf), publication # 1110
- Quick Facts about Medicare's New Coverage for Prescription Drugs for People who get Supplemental Security Income Benefits or Help from Their State Medicaid Program Paying Their Medicare Premiums.  
[www.medicare.gov/Publications/Pubs/pdf/11116.pdf](http://www.medicare.gov/Publications/Pubs/pdf/11116.pdf), publication # 11116
- Quick Facts about Medicare's New Coverage for Prescription Drugs for People with Medicare and Medicaid, and Medicaid Now Pays for Their Prescription Drugs.  
[www.medicare.gov/Publications/Pubs/pdf/11106.pdf](http://www.medicare.gov/Publications/Pubs/pdf/11106.pdf), publication # 11106
- Quick Facts about Medicare's New Coverage for Prescription Drugs If You Applied for Extra Help.  
[www.medicare.gov/Publications/Pubs/pdf/11130.pdf](http://www.medicare.gov/Publications/Pubs/pdf/11130.pdf), publication # 11130
- American Indians and Alaska Natives with Limited Incomes and Resources.  
[www.cms.hhs.gov/partnerships/downloads/11105\\_N.pdf](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/partnerships/downloads/11105_N.pdf), publication # 11105-N
- American Indians and Alaska Natives Who Get Help from Their State Pharmacy Program to Pay for Their Prescriptions.  
[www.cms.hhs.gov/partnerships/downloads/11108\\_N.pdf](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/partnerships/downloads/11108_N.pdf), publication # 11108-N
- Hawaiians with Limited Income and Resources.  
[www.medicare.gov/Publications/Pubs/pdf/11105\\_HI.pdf](http://www.medicare.gov/Publications/Pubs/pdf/11105_HI.pdf), publication # 11005-HI
- American Indians and Alaska Natives Who Get Supplemental Security Income Benefits or Help from Medicaid Paying Their Medicare Premiums.  
[www.cms.hhs.gov/partnerships/downloads/11116\\_N.pdf](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/partnerships/downloads/11116_N.pdf), publication # 11116

## Tip Sheets

- Food Stamps  
[www.cms.hhs.gov/partnerships/downloads/foodstamps.pdf](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/partnerships/downloads/foodstamps.pdf) (no publication #)
- Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage and Other Federal Means-Tested Programs  
[www.cms.hhs.gov/partnerships/downloads/LowIncome.pdf](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/partnerships/downloads/LowIncome.pdf) (no publication #)
- The Five Main Audiences  
[www.cms.hhs.gov/partnerships/downloads/FiveMainAudiences.pdf](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/partnerships/downloads/FiveMainAudiences.pdf) (no publication #)

## Other Publications

- Posters for Extra Help  
[www.ssa.gov/medicareoutreach2/posters.htm](http://www.ssa.gov/medicareoutreach2/posters.htm)
- Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage and other Federal Means-Tested Programs—Vignettes  
<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/partnerships/downloads/LISVignette.pdf> (no publication #)

## How Can I Get More information?

- Detailed information from Medicare will be available in October 2005. You can look at the *Medicare & You 2006* handbook, visit [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov) on the web or call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.
- Information also is available on **FirstStep**, a tool developed for case managers and outreach workers to help assist their clients who are homeless access Federal benefit programs. Visit **FirstStep** at [www.cms.hhs.gov/medicaid/homeless/firststep/index.html](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/medicaid/homeless/firststep/index.html)
- Information also is available from your local **State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP)**. There is a SHIP in your state with volunteers who are available to discuss your client's situation and provide information on available options. For more information about the SHIP in your state, visit [www.medicare.gov/contacts/Static/SHIPs.asp](http://www.medicare.gov/contacts/Static/SHIPs.asp)