



North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services
Division of Medical Assistance

2501 Mail Service Center • Raleigh, N. C. 27699-2501 • Tel 919-855-4100 • Fax 919-733-6608

Beverly Eaves Perdue, Governor
Albert A. Delia, Acting Secretary

Michael Watson, Director

December 10, 2012

Subject: Special Beneficiary Notice regarding a change in Medicaid coverage for certain drugs

Dear County Director of Social Services:

In late November, a mass mailing was sent to Medicaid beneficiaries who have or will be eligible for Medicare on January 1, 2013. This notice provided important information concerning coverage changes for certain drugs. The language of the notice (English or Spanish) is determined by the language preference in EIS for the case head. An English version of the notice has been posted on the website at <http://www.ncdhhs.gov/dma/pub/consumerlibrary.htm> and is also attached. A Spanish version of the notice is being translated and will be posted upon completion.

If you have any questions regarding this information, please contact your Medicaid Program Representative.

Sincerely,

Michael Watson, Director

MW/scr
Attachments



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November/December 2012

Special Notice to North Carolina Medicaid Beneficiaries Eligible for Medicare

Important Information For Medicaid Beneficiaries Under Age 21

This pertains to all services mentioned in this notice. Children under age 21 who have Medicaid are entitled to medically necessary screening, diagnostic and treatment services that are needed to “correct or ameliorate defects and physical and mental illnesses and conditions” under the Early Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) program, regardless of whether the requested service is covered under the Medicaid State Plan. For more information about EPSDT, please refer to: <http://www.ncdhhs.gov/dma/epsdt>. EPSDT does not apply to children who have NC Health Choice.

CHANGE IN NORTH CAROLINA MEDICAID PHARMACY BENEFIT

This notice is being sent to Medicaid Beneficiaries who are enrolled in or will become eligible for Medicare January 01, 2013.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR MEDICAID BENEFICIARIES WHO HAVE OR WILL BE ELIGIBLE FOR MEDICARE ON JANUARY 01, 2013

This notice is to let you know about important information and changes that are taking place with Medicaid coverage for certain drugs. Beginning **January 1, 2013**, Medicaid will no longer pay for prescriptions for medications in the **benzodiazepine** class for any condition. In addition, Medicaid will no longer pay for prescriptions in the **barbiturate** class if they are being used for seizures, cancer, or chronic mental health conditions. These drug classes include medications such as Valium®, generic diazepam, Xanax®, generic alprazolam, and phenobarbital.

Si necesitas ayuda para leer y entender la carta, por favor contáctese con el 1-800-662-7030. DIGA AL OPERADOR QUE LA NOTIFICACION Servicios de Farmacia y Auxiliares, División de Asistencia Médica.

You are receiving this notice because you are currently eligible or will be eligible for Medicare on January 01, 2013. If you are not eligible for Medicare, please disregard this notice.

Why are these medications no longer part of N.C. Medicaid Benefits for Medicare Eligibles?

The Medicare Improvement for Patients and Providers Act (MIPPA), Section 175 now includes coverage of all benzodiazepines for any condition and barbiturates used for seizures, cancer, or chronic mental health conditions under Medicare Part D. N.C. Medicaid cannot, by rule, provide the same benefit coverage as Medicare. Because Medicare will begin coverage of these drugs January 01, 2013, N.C. Medicaid can no longer pay for these drugs effective January 01, 2013, if you are eligible for Medicare.

What will happen to my prescriptions?

Until January 01, 2013, current active prescriptions should still be available at your pharmacy of choice without regard to this change in benefits. N.C. Medicaid will continue to pay for these drugs through **December 31, 2012**.

What do I need to do?

Beginning on January 01, 2013, you must use your Medicare Part D benefit to pay for these medications. When you obtain a refill or drop off a new prescription for these medications, please give your Medicare Part D card to the pharmacy so that these medications can be paid for properly.

If you are not sure whether you are taking benzodiazepines (medications such as Valium®, generic diazepam, Xanax®, generic alprazolam) or barbiturates (medications such as Phenobarbital), please contact your physician or pharmacist prior to January 01, 2013. Additionally, if you are not sure whether you are covered by Medicare Part D, contact your pharmacist prior to January 01, 2013.

What if I am not enrolled in a Medicare Part D plan by January 01, 2013?

If you are not enrolled in a Medicare Part D plan by January 01, 2013, you must pay the full amount for any refill or new prescription for these medications effective January 01, 2013. To learn more about Medicare Part D, please visit www.medicare.gov or call 1-800-MEDICARE, contact the North Carolina Seniors Health Insurance Information Program, (NC SHIIP) at 1-800-443-9354, or contact your pharmacist.

Who to Contact With Questions About Information in This Notice: For questions or concerns, please contact the Department of Health and Human Services Customer Service Center Monday – Friday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (excluding state holidays) at 1-800-662-7030 (English/Spanish) or 1-877-452-2514 (this is a TTY number and only those with TTY equipment can talk to a person when this number is dialed). Ask that your call be transferred to Medicaid Clinical Policy and Programs Pharmacy Section. You may also contact the NC Medicaid Pharmacy Section directly at 919-855-4300.