

**Clients with HIV Enrolled In Medicare Must Reapply For Illinois Cares Rx
And Extra Help, And May Wish To Select A New Drug Plan**

HIV-positive Medicare beneficiaries with annual income between 135% and about 225% of the federal poverty level (\$13,800 to \$22,800 for a family of one) should immediately apply or reapply for Medicare Extra Help and Illinois Cares Rx for help paying for their medications. Medicare enrollees may also choose a new Medicare Part D drug plan between November 15 and December 31, if they wish.

Two questions to determine if an HIV-positive individual needs to apply or reapply for the Illinois Cares Rx HIV Benefit or Extra Help:

- 1) Medicare: Is a consumer on Medicare, but not also on Medicaid (not dually eligible)?
- 2) Income: Is the consumer's income between about \$13,800 and \$22,800 per year?

If the answer to both questions is "yes," consumers should:

- 1) Apply or re-apply for the Illinois Cares Rx HIV Benefit. An application was mailed to all 2007 enrollees, but they should apply online at www.illinoiscaresrx.com for fastest processing. They should apply immediately. Clients must answer "yes" to the question about their HIV status. By doing this, they will be charged the correct cost sharing at the pharmacy.
- 2) Apply or reapply for Extra Help available under Medicare Part D through the Social Security Administration (SSA). Apply online at <http://www.socialsecurity.gov/prescriptionhelp/> or contact SSA at 1-800-772-1213 or 1-800-324-0778 (TTY for hearing impaired). *If clients are determined ineligible for Extra Help, they may still receive prescription drug benefits under Illinois Cares Rx.*
- 3) Enroll in a Medicare Part D plan that coordinates with Illinois Cares Rx. Coordinating PDP plans are AARP Medicare Rx Preferred, UnitedHealth Rx Basic, WellCare Signature, First Health Part D Premier, Humana PDP Standard, and SilverScript (the last three are new for 2008). There are also Medicare Advantage managed care plans coordinating with Illinois Cares Rx. Clients can switch plans between November 15 and December 31, but any switch should be done as soon as possible.
 - If a client switches Part D plans, notify the new plan that they are enrolled in the "Illinois Cares Rx HIV Benefit". This will ensure they are charged the correct cost sharing at the pharmacy.

RULE OF THUMB: Is a Medicare-eligible consumer paying more than a co-pay of \$5.60 per month for HIV drugs? If so, there is something wrong! Sign up for a benefits consultation today! Medicare-enrolled clients whose income is too high to qualify for Illinois Cares Rx can and should stay on Illinois AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP).

For more information, contact AIDS Legal Council, (312) 427-8990 or Health and Disability Advocates, (312) 223-9600, and visit <http://www.aidschicago.org/advocacy/medicare.php>.