

## **Medicare Part D Open Enrollment—An Opportunity to Save Money**

Open enrollment for Medicare plans in 2021 is October 15 through December 7, 2020. This is an important time for people with Medicare to review their current Part D prescription drug plan, note any changes, and determine if it is still the best option for them. Since insurance companies can change their Part D plan premiums, deductibles and co-pays each year, switching to a different plan could result in extra money in your pocket!

If you have had changes in your medications this past year it seems obvious that reviewing your plan and comparing it to other plans is a good idea. But even if you have not had medication changes, a new pricing structure for your current plan could mean that the costs for your same drugs will increase next year. Likewise, a different company may now offer better coverage for those same medications. Some people have saved hundreds of dollars in a year by switching to a different Part D plan. The only way to find the lowest cost plan for next year is to review your plan and compare it to other Part D plans.

In addition to changing the list of medications that they cover (known as their “formulary”) and how they cover them, Part D plans can also impose drug restrictions on covered medications. When you are reviewing your plan or comparing it to other plans, be sure to note any drug restrictions for your specific medications. In some cases, you may need to get prior authorization before your medication is covered. Another type of restriction, step therapy, means that the insurance company will have you try an alternative drug before they pay for the one your doctor has chosen for you. And if quantity limits are in place, you are limited to a certain number of pills each month. These are more reasons it is important to carefully review your Part D plan each year.

People on SeniorCare, Wisconsin’s prescription drug assistance program, are not affected by this open enrollment period. They only need to renew their enrollment every 12 months. A renewal notice will be sent in the mail to the beneficiary. If you are on SeniorCare you might want to check on the cost of a part D plan to see if SeniorCare is still the best option for you.

Assistance with plan comparisons is available through the following resources:

- 1-800-MEDICARE or [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov)
- Medigap helpline 1-800-242-1060
- Disability Drug Helpline 1-800-926-4862 (if under age 60)
- Wisconsin Medigap Prescription Drug Helpline 1-855-67 PART D (1-855-677-2783)
- Aging and Disability Resource Center of the North- Bayfield County Branch Elder Benefits Specialist Marianne Johnson 1-866-663-3607