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What Is Medication Therapy Management?

by Louanne Cunico, RPh

Presbyterian Health Plan

New Mexico Prescription Improvement Coalition Member

The new Medicare Part D prescription drug benefit covers medication therapy management (MTM) services for some patients – those who are most likely to benefit from it. Under Part D, you may qualify for this valuable service if you:

- Spend at least \$4,000 a year on prescription medications
- Take many medications
- Have multiple health conditions

The goal of MTM services is to help improve your health by ensuring you are taking your medications safely. MTM is a free program designed to help you get the most benefit from your drugs. It may also help you save money. Members who are taking several drugs may benefit the most.

Through MTM, you can meet with an MTM pharmacist. These MTM pharmacists have been specially trained to help you. They will review your drugs with you and talk about things like:

- Do you take two or more drugs that have the same purpose?
- Do you understand how to use your drugs?
- Should any of your drugs not be taken together?
- Are you taking vitamins or over-the-counter drugs that could affect your prescription drugs?
- Are there ways you can save money on your drugs?

Benefits of MTM Services

The benefits of taking part in MTM services with your community pharmacy include:

- Personal review of the drugs you currently take
- Setting an individualized medication treatment plan
- Advice on selecting over-the-counter medicines when needed
- Review of all new drugs that you start taking
- Education and training to enhance your understanding of medications
- Coordination of MTM services with your other health care providers to ensure the best outcomes for you

Getting Started in MTM Services

- Contact member services at your Medicare Part D plan and ask for information on medication therapy management.
- Take all of your medicines with you to your MTM review, including all non-prescription medicines, vitamins or other supplements. Also take a list of any other medicines that you have taken recently.

- Your MTM pharmacist will work with you and your doctors if any changes are suggested. No change will be made unless you and your doctor both agree.

The New Mexico Prescription Improvement Coalition (NMPIC) is run by the New Mexico Medical Review Association and works to improve prescription drug safety in New Mexico. NMPIC begins a New Mexico face-to-face MTM pilot in April 2007. Under this one-year pilot, community pharmacists provide MTM services through face-to-face visits and follow-up calls with people with Medicare Part D who are eligible for this benefit. The pilot will focus on people with diabetes, hypertension, hyperlipidemia and congestive heart failure. Your local pharmacist may be involved in this pilot.

To see if you qualify for MTM services, contact your Part D Member Services Department. If you need information on which Part D plan you have, call Medicare at 1-800-Medicare (1-800-633-4227) or visit www.medicare.gov. You may also contact the New Mexico Aging & Long Term Services Department, the NM SHIP/SMP Program, at 1-800-432-2080.

Louanne Cunico is a clinical pharmacist with Presbyterian Health Plan, where her major responsibilities are medication therapy management and disease management. She is a registered pharmacist and has been working in ambulatory care for 18 years. Cunico has been a member of the New Mexico Prescription Improvement Coalition since its inception in February 2006.