



65% of Medicare Prescription Drug Plan Recipients Unaware of New 2011 Enrollment Dates: PlanPrescriber Survey Finds

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MOUNTAIN VIEW, CA, Sep 20, 2011 (MARKETWIRE via COMTEX) -- Two-thirds (65%) of Medicare Part D enrollees are not aware that Medicare's Annual Enrollment Period (AEP) for Part D and Medicare Advantage benefits has been changed for 2012 plans, according to a new national survey. The randomized phone survey polled 711 adults age 65 and over, in July and August of 2011, and was conducted by Opinion Research Corporation and sponsored by PlanPrescriber (www.PlanPrescriber.com), a wholly-owned subsidiary of eHealth, Inc. (NASDAQ: EHTH). Among those surveyed, 475 respondents age 65 and over reported having Medicare prescription drug coverage.

In previous years the AEP began on November 15 and ended on December 31. But, for plans beginning on January 1, 2012, the AEP begins a full month earlier on October 15 and ends on December 7, 2011. During AEP, Medicare beneficiaries have the option to review and change their Medicare Part D and/or Medicare Advantage health coverage prior to the coming plan year when new plan benefits go into effect. This year's AEP gives people the chance to review new plans for 2012 and the option to change their existing plan, if something more affordable or better suited to their needs is available.

"These numbers are deeply troubling to me and should send a message to those of us who work with people on Medicare that we need to start making people aware of these new dates immediately," said Ross Blair, CEO of PlanPrescriber. "Every year our web traffic goes up and our customer care center gets flooded with phone calls in the last few days of December. Invariably those phone calls are from people trying to update their coverage at the last minute. This year, people who call to make a 'last minute' change after December 7, will be too late. We've got a lot of work to do to make sure people on Medicare don't wake up on January 1, 2012 with a prescription drug benefit that no longer covers all of their medications or that they can't afford."

Blair continued, "In September we published an analysis of 25,000 user sessions on our web site from last year's AEP and found that after a user input the name of their drug plan, their zip code and the drugs they were currently taking (if any) into our drug plan comparison tool, over 90 percent would have saved an average of \$5001 annually on their prescription drugs by updating their drug coverage heading into 2011. For a person on a fixed income, saving \$40 a month can make an enormous impact on their standard of living, so it's critically important that we make people be aware of this date change."

The phone survey also found that:

- Aware of the Annual Enrollment Period: 91% of people with Medicare prescription drug coverage knew of AEP and the majority (70%) planned to review their plan during AEP.
- Awareness of new Annual Enrollment Period: Lower income Medicare beneficiaries were among those most likely to be aware of the new enrollment dates; one-third (37%) with an annual income under \$35,000 per year said they were aware of the new dates. By comparison, one-in-five (21%) of those earning between \$75,000 and \$100,000 per year were aware of the new dates.
- Expectations that their drug plans will change: When asked if they expected their current Medicare prescription drug coverage to change in 2012, nearly two-thirds (63%) of all respondents said they either did not expect their prescription drug coverage to change (44%), or didn't know if it would change (19%) in 2012.

These expectations are notable because Medicare prescription drug plans do often change from year to year, which can affect what a consumer pays out of their own pocket for prescription drugs.

Survey Data:

Responses	Total	Income Less than \$35K:	Income \$35K - \$50K:	Income \$50K to \$75K:	Income \$75K to \$100K:	Income \$100+:

Yes - I am aware of Medicare's Annual Enrollment Period	91%	89%	99%	86%	100%	100%

Yes - I plan to review my Medicare coverage this year	70%	71%	79%	59%	68%	75%
Yes - I know the Annual Enrollment Period changed in 2011	35%	37%	30%	39%	21%	23%
Yes - I reviewed my coverage last year	67%	69%	71%	63%	74%	59%
Respondent Demographics	Male	Female	Attended/ Graduated High School	Attended/ Graduated College	White (NH)	Other
Yes - I have a Medicare prescription drug plan (Medicare Advantage or Stand-Alone)	40%	60%	49% (2)	51% (2)	78%	14%

Additional Resources You may be able to get Extra Help to pay for your prescription drug premiums and costs. For more information on Extra Help, you can contact PlanPrescriber.com at 800-404-6968 -- TTY User: 711 to be connected with a partner's licensed representative who can discuss Extra Help eligibility rules or contact Medicare directly at 1-800-MEDICARE (1800-633-4227). TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048, 24 hours a day / 7 days a week; the Social Security Office at 1-800-772-1213 between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m., Monday through Friday. TTY users should call 1-800-325-0778; or Your Medicaid Office (only required for pieces referencing Part D benefits or cost-sharing). In general, beneficiaries must use network pharmacies to access their prescription drug benefit, except in non-routine circumstances, and quantity limitations and restrictions may apply.

Sources: (1) Data comes from PlanPrescriber.com's 2010 Choice & Impact Study: http://news.ehealthinsurance.com/pr/ehi/document/2011_PlanPrescriber_Choice_Impact_Study.pdf

(2) Approximately 10% declined to answer the question.

Survey Methodology Data presented here is a summary of findings from two telephone surveys conducted by Opinion Research Corporation among random national samples of 711 adults age 65 and over, living in private households in the continental United States. Among those surveyed, 475 respondents age 65 and over reported having Medicare prescription drug coverage. The data provided here is a subset of the complete survey data. A full copy of the findings are available upon request. Interviewing for this survey was completed by Opinion Research Corporation during the period of July 28 and August 29, 2011.

Medicare has neither reviewed nor endorsed this information.

About PlanPrescriber.com PlanPrescriber (www.planprescriber.com), a wholly-owned subsidiary of eHealth, Inc., is a leading provider of comparison tools and educational materials for Medicare Advantage, Medicare Part D Prescription Drug Plans, and Medicare Supplement insurance products. Medicare beneficiaries can take advantage of PlanPrescriber's no cost online advisor tools by logging on to www.PlanPrescriber.com. PlanPrescriber is a tool designed to help Medicare recipients find a Medicare plan that covers their specific medical and prescription drug needs at the lowest possible out-of-pocket cost.

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