

GENERAL INFORMATION SYSTEM
DIVISION: Temporary Assistance

December 29, 2004

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TO: Commissioners; TA & FS Directors; WMS Coordinators

FROM: Russell Sykes/rs, Deputy Commissioner, Division of Temporary Assistance

SUBJECT: FS Outreach via EPIC Letter regarding Medicare Rx Drug Discount programs

EFFECTIVE DATE: Immediately

CONTACT PERSON: Food Stamp Policy Team at 1-800-343-8859, ext. 3-1469

This message relates to the enhanced medical deduction for individuals enrolled in a Medicare Approved Prescription Drug Card discount/credit program, as introduced in 04 ADM-07. Attached is a one page outreach letter sent by NYS Department of Health during the week of December 20th to approximately 108,000 individuals enrolled in the Elderly Pharmaceutical Insurance Coverage (EPIC) program. The NYS DOH had automatically enrolled these individuals for the "First Health/EPIC" Medicare drug discount card in 2004, entitling those individuals also in receipt of food stamp benefits to the enhanced medical expense deduction as detailed in 04 ADM-07. NYS OTDA is attempting to obtain a file of these individuals to assess the feasibility of performing an automated mass rebudget for those already in receipt of food stamp benefits. However, in the meantime, local districts should be aware of this outreach letter and be prepared to respond appropriately to inquiries by elderly EPIC enrollees who either wish to apply for food stamps or, if already in receipt of food stamp benefits, wish to obtain the enhanced medical deduction. **Receipt of this DOH outreach letter is sufficient proof of enrollment in a Medicare Approved Prescription Drug card discount/credit program.** Please refer to 04 ADM-07 for details about how to budget the enhanced medical deduction.

December 15, 2004

EPIC ID
(First Health/EPIC Medicare ID)

Dear EPIC Participant:

I am pleased to tell you that on January 1, 2005, you will automatically receive another \$600 credit on your First Health/EPIC Medicare drug discount card. This will bring your total Medicare credit for both 2004 and 2005 to \$1,200. **You do not have to do anything to receive this credit! Just show your discount card to your pharmacist when you purchase a prescription, and....**

- Remind your pharmacist to bill the First Health/EPIC Medicare drug discount card with the \$600 credit first. Then, your pharmacist should submit any remaining drug costs to EPIC.
- You will only have to pay the EPIC co-payment, which in most cases will be lower by using your Medicare credit first.
- When your 2004 and 2005 Medicare credits are used up, you will only use EPIC and you will pay the same EPIC co-payments that you pay now. Remember any unused Medicare credit from 2004 can be used in 2005.
- You will not be billed for any EPIC enrollment fees while you are enrolled in the First Health/EPIC Medicare drug discount card.
- If you cannot find your card, please call the EPIC toll-free Helpline at **1-800-332-3742** to request a new one. In the meantime, bring this letter to your pharmacy. Your First Health discount card and EPIC card numbers are shown at the top of this letter.

Important note: If you get **food stamps** you should tell your food stamp worker that you have the First Health/EPIC Medicare card – you may get more food stamps each month and, if you tell your worker before January 1, 2005, you may be able to get up to 24 months of increased food stamps. If you do not get food stamps, you should considering applying. Call 1-800-342-3009 for the address and phone number of your local food stamp office.

Following these steps will help you save the most money on your prescriptions. If you have any questions, please call the EPIC Helpline at **1-800-332-3742**. Happy Holidays!

Sincerely,

Julie A. Naglieri
Director

¿Necesita ayuda? Llame **1-800-332-3742**

EPIC

1-800-332-3742