



Mental Health Association

of the Heartland

Advocacy, Education and Support in Kansas and Missouri

739 Minnesota Ave.
Kansas City, KS 66101

Nonprofit Org.
US Postage
PAID
Permit No. 42
Kansas City, KS



The Mental Health Association of the Heartland

NEWS

Advocacy, Education and Support in Kansas and Missouri

Fall/Winter 2005

(October/November/December)

Medicare Part D



Petra Robinson, WASA/Peer Advocate assists Debbie Tankelesley with her Medicare Part D switch.

Most Americans are aware that there have been sweeping changes in prescription coverage for Medicare recipients. In most cases, the change is thought to effect only our Senior citizens. However, there is a vast group of affected individuals that are dually eligible for both Medicaid and Medicare. This classification usually pertains to people who are on Social Security due to disability, including those with mental health disorders.

Dually eligible individuals will be pre-enrolled by the government in a Medicare Part D plan. If this plan meets their needs, they need take no further action. But, if the selected plan does not meet their needs - that is, if their medications are not covered - then there is opportunity to switch to a plan that may be more suitable for them. Mental Health Association of the Heartland has resources available to help people make the switch.

Finding the best plan can be frustrating, as there are over 40 plans available. We are here to help people through this complex issue. Mental Health Association of the Heartland's new resource "Get Educated, Get Enrolled: a workbook for Mental Health Consumers" may be mailed or downloaded from our web site. (www.mhah.org) Our staff is available to answer questions and help navigate people through this enrollment process. If you are experiencing problems with, or have questions about Medicare Part D enrollment, contact Randy Johnson at 913-281-2221 ext.111 or rjohnson@mhah.org with questions.

Medicare Part D Timeline

- October 13, 2005 Materials describing Part D plans were provided to all Medicare beneficiaries, through mail; 1-800-MEDICARE, Plan Comparison Web Tool and Medicare Personal Plan Finder became available on Medicare.gov
- October 27- November 10, 2005 CMS notified dual eligibles of the Part D plan into which they would be auto-enrolled.
- November 15- December 31, 2005 Medicaid drug coverage for dual eligibles ended. Medicare discount drug card program ended.
- January 1, 2006 The Medicare Part D prescription drug benefit began.
- February 2006 Dual eligibles can switch plans, as often as once a month.

Our Mission

Mental Health Association of the Heartland is dedicated to promoting the mental health of the community, and improving the lives of persons with mental illness, through advocacy, education and support.



Funded through United Way

Tell your representative to make good mental healthcare a priority!

Kansas

Senate Roster

| | | | |
|---------|-----------------|--|--------------|
| Dist. 1 | Dennis Pyle | pyle@senate.state.ks.us | 785-742-3780 |
| Dist. 2 | Marci Francisco | francisco@senate.state.ks.us | 785-842-6402 |
| Dist. 3 | Roger Pine | pine@senate.state.ks.us | 785-843-6949 |
| Dist. 4 | David Haley | haley@senate.state.ks.us | 913-321-3210 |

House Representatives

| | | | |
|---------|----------------|--|--------------|
| Dist. 1 | Doug Gatewood | gatewood@house.state.ks.us | 620-429-3690 |
| Dist. 2 | Robert Grant | grant@house.state.ks.us | 620-457-8496 |
| Dist. 3 | Julie Menghini | menghini@house.state.ks.us | 620-232-6519 |
| Dist. 4 | Lynne Oharah | oharah@house.state.ks.us | 620-743-0144 |

Missouri

Senate Roster

| | | | |
|---------|---------------|--|----------------|
| Dist. 1 | Harry Kennedy | kennedy@senate.state.mo.us | (573) 751-2126 |
| Dist. 2 | Jon Dolan | dolan@senate.state.mo.us | (573) 751-4964 |
| Dist. 3 | Kevin Engler | engler@senate.state.mo.us | (573) 751-3455 |
| Dist. 4 | Pat Dougherty | dougherty@senate.state.mo.us | (573) 751-3599 |
| Dist. 5 | Maida Coleman | coleman@senate.state.mo.us | (573) 751-2606 |
| Dist. 6 | Carl Vogel | vogel@senate.state.mo.us | (573) 751-2076 |
| Dist. 7 | John Loudon | loudon@senate.state.mo.us | (573) 751-9763 |
| Dist. 8 | Matt Bartle | bartle@senate.state.mo.us | (573) 751-1464 |
| Dist. 9 | Yvonne Wilson | wilson@senate.state.mo.us | (573) 751-9758 |

House Representatives

| | | | |
|---------|-------------------|--|----------------|
| Dist. 1 | Brian Munzlinger | Brian.Munzlinger@house.mo.gov | (573) 751-7985 |
| Dist. 2 | Bob Behnen | Robert.Behnen@house.mo.gov | (573) 751-0224 |
| Dist. 3 | James Whorton | Jim.Whorton@house.mo.gov | (573) 751-1649 |
| Dist. 4 | Brad Lager | Brad.Lager@house.mo.gov | (573) 751-9465 |
| Dist. 5 | Jim Guest | Jim.Guest@house.mo.gov | (573) 751-0246 |
| Dist. 6 | Rachel L. Bringer | Rachel.Bringer@house.mo.gov | (573) 751-9818 |
| Dist. 7 | John Quinn | John.Quinn@house.mo.gov | (573) 751-2917 |
| Dist. 8 | Kathy Chinn | kathy.chinn@house.mo.gov | (573) 751-2629 |
| Dist. 9 | Wes Shoemyer | Wes.Shoemyer@house.mo.gov | (573) 751-7852 |

Yes, I want to help with educating our legislators! I'm willing to:

- Write a letter to my legislators
- Write a letter to the editor
- Talk with community groups
- Share a personal life story

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

E-mail: _____

Please fill this in and send to us at: Mental Health Association of the Heartland
739 Minnesota Ave., Kansas City, KS 66101

President's Message



Recently I picked up and began re-reading my copy of Robert Putnam's book Bowling Alone, a pivotal 2000 bestseller that chronicled and described "the collapse of American Community" while sowing seeds of hope and concrete suggestions for its "revival." In a nutshell, the book cites voluminous research that demonstrates both individuals and communities do better and are healthier when the community and for the individuals within it possess and cultivate "civic engagement" and "social capital."

I was immediately struck by the parallels between this book, and the mission and programs of the Mental Health Association of the Heartland (MHAH). Moreover, I recognized why it felt so important to me to combine the topics of advocacy and membership into one newsletter.

Civic engagement includes knowing and standing up for your rights and studying issues of personal importance, then "weighing in" on them through letters to elected officials and other policy makers, and in the voting booth; it also includes becoming involved with others in doing so. This is the MHAH's system advocacy mission at its simplest level. Social capital is cultivated through joint effort and group involvement be it helping other consumers on their recovery path, living interdependantly in the community with supportive housing, rallying at the state houses in Jefferson City and Topeka, or joining and becoming involved in organizations and causes. This is self-advocacy, another MHAH cornerstone, at its simplest.

Both forms of advocacy, and the social capital and civic engagement which result from them are outcomes of which the agency is proud. Nonetheless, we sometimes feel, when we look at the battles of stigma and poor policy, that we are "bowling alone" – that the fun and camaraderie of the bowling league is a thing of the past.

Putnam believes, and I concur, that we can, and indeed must revive community. Those of you who know me know I can't bowl to save my life, so I doubt the agency will organize an actual bowling team – but I do invite you, through membership, to get in league with us – to revive and build a mentally healthy community – in all senses of the word.

Sincerely

Susan Crain Lewis, President/CEO

The Mental Health Maze

Mental Health Association of the Heartland is proud to have been a part of the Mental Health Community Forum the "The Mental Health Maze" that was held on January 13, 2006 at Hyatt Regency Crown Center Hotel. Jointly sponsored by Health Care Foundation of Greater Kansas City, Jackson County Community Mental Health Fund Board of Trustees and REACH Healthcare Foundation the forum featured Dr. David Satcher, M.D., PH.D. and Kathryn Power, Director of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Center for Mental Health Services. Mental Health Association of the Heartland had the privilege of providing Ms. Power with the Gracie Award for outstanding efforts in systems transformation.

The day also included break out "tracks" addressing Depression, Domestic Violence and Reengineering the Mental Health Systems, designed to assist policy makers, philanthropists, opinion leaders, providers, consumers, and other concerned citizens in understanding the complexity, challenges, opportunities and best practices in each of these areas. For more information or a copy of Forum materials, contact Shani Tate Ross at (816) 842-2111 or via e-mail at shani@trozzolo.com.

Medicare Part D in 10 Steps

1. At www.medicare.gov, click on "Compare Medicare Prescription Drug Plans". Then scroll down to "Find a Medicare Prescription Drug Plan" and click on the arrow to the right.
2. Fill in personal information – Medicare claim number, last name, date of birth, effective date for Medicare Part A or B, and ZIP code – and then click on the gray "Search Plans" button. Or, if you do not have your personal information, you can scroll further down on this page and click on "General Search". If you provided personal information, the next page will ask you to click on "Continue to General Search" before moving on.
3. You'll be asked several questions about current drug coverage and eligibility for low-income assistance. Check your answers (some will lead to more questions), then click on "Continue".
4. You are now ready to consider the plans. Click on "Choose a Drug Plan Type", which will give you the option of requesting information on Medicare Advantage plans or Medicare prescription drug plans. Click the appropriate button.
5. In most cases, you can now click on "Enter My Medications". Type in the names of your medications and, after each one, click on "Search for Drug", then select the correct medication. (Note that you can skip this section and first go to "C. Limit Your Drug Plans" to set desired deductible and premium levels before returning to "Enter My Medications").
6. After you've entered your medications, click on "Continue With Selected Drugs". You will have the option of entering the exact dosage you take and whether you want to obtain your drugs at a certain pharmacy.
7. The Web site should now give you the names of several plans meeting your stated needs, along with cost information.
8. Make a print-out at this point. The Web site does not allow you to save your progress and return later.
9. If you decide to enroll in a plan, click on "Enroll" on the extreme right of your screen.
10. Most plans will allow you to enroll by phone or by mail. For contact information, click on the name of the plan.



NMHA's Fall Policy Conference

MHAH staff has been very involved this Fall attending and providing training in policy and services. In August, President/CEO Susan Crain Lewis was invited by the NMHA to join 4 other affiliate leaders to represent the affiliate field at the National Conference of State Legislators.

Sessions focused on Medicare and Medicaid changes – from a very different perspective than we're used to! This was truly an illuminating experience! Lewis then traveled to Washington in October to participate in the Annual Fall Policy Conference. Medicaid and Medicare were again hot topics – but the conference also addressed policy and program and funding initiatives related to incarceration, diversion and "forensic" populations, and housing (co-presented by Lewis and Ann O'Hara of the Technical Assistance Collaborative Inc).

Finally, in November Lewis was invited to participate in a Medicare Part D Media Training sponsored by the Medicare Access Network in Minneapolis. This session proved particularly helpful as Mental Health Association of the Heartland staff worked collaboratively with multiple national partners to draw attention to the impact of the changes on "dual eligibles" – kudos to Fox 4 and Marilyn McKean for picking up and airing the story on December 17.

Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)

What is Seasonal Affective Disorder?

Some people suffer from symptoms of depression during the winter months, with symptoms subsiding during the spring and summer months. This may be a sign of Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD). SAD is a mood disorder associated with depression episodes related to seasonal variations of light.

SAD was first noted before 1845, but was not officially named until the early 1980's. As sunlight has affected the seasonal activities of animals (i.e., reproductive cycles and hibernation), SAD may be an effect of this seasonal light variation in humans. As seasons change, there is a shift in our "biological internal clocks" or circadian rhythm, due partly to these changes in sunlight patterns. This can cause our biological clocks to be out of "step" with our daily schedules. The most difficult months for SAD sufferers are January and February, and younger persons and women are at higher risk.

Symptoms Include:

- regularly occurring symptoms of depression (excessive eating and sleeping, weight gain) during the fall or winter months.
- full remission from depression occurs in the spring and summer months.
- symptoms have occurred in the past two years, with no nonseasonal depression episodes.
- seasonal episodes substantially outnumber nonseasonal depression episodes.
- a craving for sugary and/or starchy foods.

Possible Cause of this Disorder

Melatonin, a sleep-related hormone secreted by the pineal gland in the brain, has been linked to SAD. This hormone, which may cause symptoms of depression, is produced at increased levels in the dark. Therefore, when the days are shorter and darker the production of this hormone increases.

Treatments

Phototherapy or bright light therapy has been shown to suppress the brain's secretion of melatonin. Although, there have been no research findings to definitely link this therapy with an antidepressant effect, many people respond to this treatment. The device most often used today is a bank of white fluorescent lights on a metal reflector and shield with a plastic screen. For mild symptoms, spending time outdoors during the day or arranging homes and workplaces to receive more sunlight may be helpful. One study found that an hour's walk in winter sunlight was as effective as two and a half hours under bright artificial light.

If phototherapy doesn't work, an antidepressant drug may prove effective in

reducing or eliminating SAD symptoms, but there may be unwanted side effects to consider. Discuss your symptoms thoroughly with your family doctor and/or mental health professional.

For More Information:

Contact Marie at (913) 281-2221 ext 115.

Making the Most of your Mental Illness Series...

This is a series of workshops and seminars that are sponsored by the Mental Health Association of the Heartland and The Depressive Bipolar Support Alliance Greater Kansas City. The series is designed for individuals with a diagnosed mental health problem, their families, significant others, care providers and healthcare professionals. Each session provides up-to-date information and resources that encourage wellness and recovery. CEU certificates are available to professionals at \$5.00 per workshop/seminar. Workshop/seminar location is the Old Mission United Methodist Church at 5519 State Park Rd., Fairway, KS 66205 from 7:00-8:30 PM. The following tentative schedule has been developed for the 2006 year:



Tony Terwelp,
Peer Advocate

Series 2: Combating Symptoms of Mental Illness

January 26, 2006 - Alternative Ways of Dealing with Symptoms of Mental Illness

February 23, 2006 - Interpersonal Relationships: Building the Supports that Sustain You

March 23, 2006 - Families, Friends and Co-Workers: Effective Ways of Supporting Persons Who Show Signs of Mental Illness

Series 3: Intra-Personal Development

April 27, 2006 - Grieving the Loss of Your Old Self and Defining the New You

May 25, 2006 - Increasing Your Self-Esteem by Recognizing Your Strengths and Weaknesses

July 27, 2006 - Enhancing Your Life by Balancing Your Mental Health

Contact Shellie Arriaga, Director, Community Education at 913/281-2221 ext.112 or by e-mailing her at sarriaga@mhah.org for CEU and registration information.

DON'T NEED THIS NEWSLETTER?

We are happy to continue sending our newsletter to all persons who wish to receive it. We now have the ability to delivery our newsletter to your through your email.

If you would like to remain in our database, but no longer wish to receive the newsletter or would like to receive the newsletter through your email account, please let us know.

However, if you no longer want to remain on our data base, please help us by letting us know. We will remove your name from our list.

If you have any changes or updates for our mailing list, please notify us. E-mail us at ajones@mhah.org or write a note to Mental Health Association of the Heartland, 739 Minnesota Ave., Kansas City, KS 66101 or phone us at (913) 281-2221 ext 125.

We also welcome feedback about our programming, the content of our newsletter and our web site. Thank you.