

Beginning June 1, 2009, the state will no longer be paying for newly prescribed medications that are not covered by your Medicare Part D Plan's 'formulary' (list of covered drugs).

QUESTION: What about the medication I am currently taking? Will it continue to be covered?

ANSWER: Yes. If you are currently taking a medication that is not covered and considered non-formulary by your Medicare Part D plan, ConnPACE will continue to pay for this medication. This change applies to any 'new' Medicare Part D non-formulary drugs; ConnPACE will no longer pay for these drugs.

QUESTION: What if I am prescribed a medication after June 1, 2009, that is not on my Medicare Part D plan's formulary? What do I do?

ANSWER: You can ask your pharmacist to contact your prescriber to discuss other medications that are available on your Medicare Drug plan's formulary. Your prescriber can work with your Medicare Part D plan, as well, to discuss options.

Your prescriber may either change your prescription to a drug that is covered by your Medicare Part D plan, or he/she may ask your Medicare Part D plan to grant an exception or authorization so that the drug will be covered by the Medicare Part D Plan.

If it is medically necessary for you to receive the specific drug that is not covered by your Medicare Part D plan, your prescriber must ask for this exception or authorization from your Medicare Part D plan.

QUESTION: What if I have to take this particular medication due to my medical condition?

ANSWER: If it is medically necessary for you to receive the specific drug that is not covered by your Medicare Part D plan, your prescriber must ask for this exception or authorization from your Medicare Part D plan. Please have your prescriber contact your Medicare Part D plan directly. If your prescriber needs assistance, he/she can contact the Department of Social Services' Pharmacy Unit in Hartford. The Department of Social Services (administering agency of ConnPACE) will continue to work with pharmacies and prescribers to help answer their questions about your Medicare Part D plan.

QUESTION: Is it possible for me to switch Medicare Part D plans to one that has a formulary that covers my medications?

ANSWER: It may be possible for you to switch Medicare Part D plans at this time. You may call CHOICES, at 1-800-994-9422, for help in comparing your current medications to the formularies of different Part D plans and determining whether you are qualified to change plans at the given time.

CHOICES is a contracted service of the Department of Social Services. Your pharmacist may be able to assist you in researching another Medicare Part D plan as well. Calling Medicare at 1-800-Medicare can also connect you with assistance with enrolling in another Medicare Part D plan.

QUESTION: What about drugs Medicare Part D does not cover at all, such as benzodiazepines, barbituates, over-the-counter drugs, etc.? Will ConnPACE continue to cover drugs that Medicare Part D does not cover?

ANSWER: Yes, ConnPACE will continue to cover the Medicare Part D 'not-covered' drugs. In other words, if Medicare Part D doesn't cover a drug in the first place, no matter what particular plan you may be enrolled in, ConnPACE will continue to cover it. The change in payment policy only applies to new prescriptions for Medicare Part D non-formulary drugs – that is, drugs your particular Medicare Part D plan does not cover -- that are being submitted to ConnPACE for payment.

QUESTION: Is this a permanent change?

ANSWER: This change will be in effect until the remainder of the state's current fiscal year (June 30, 2009), or until the budget is adopted if that happens after the end of the fiscal year. Depending on final budget, the new policy may or may not be changed. If any changes are made after the budget passes, you will receive another letter with more information.