

**NOTICE OF CONTINUED EMERGENCY DRUG COVERAGE FOR
PERSONS WITH FULL-SCOPE MEDI-CAL AND MEDICARE
PRESCRIPTION DRUG COVERAGE**

What Is The Emergency Coverage Plan And Who Is Covered By The Plan?

On January 12, 2006, Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger issued an order directing the California Department of Health Services (CDHS), which oversees the Medi-Cal program, to “immediately” implement a temporary emergency program to pay for prescription drugs for people who are covered by both Medi-Cal and Medicare and who have been unable to obtain their medications through their Medicare Part D coverage. On January 20th, 2006, the governor signed Assembly Bill (AB) 132 which extends this emergency coverage program through February 11, 2006. This legislation will ensure that Californians enrolled in both Medi-Cal and Medicare will have access to necessary prescription drugs if they have been unable to obtain necessary or life saving medications, due to problems transitioning them to Medicare prescription drug plans.

All persons with Medicare Part A and/or B and full-scope Medi-Cal, even those persons who have Medi-Cal with a share of cost, are covered by this emergency plan through February 11, 2006.

What Should Pharmacies Do?

A pharmacy can bill Medi-Cal when one of the following requirements is met:

- The pharmacy has submitted a claim to Medicare and the claim was improperly denied by Medicare; or
- The pharmacy has been unable to submit a claim solely due to the unavailability of complete or accurate Medicare drug plan enrollment info; or
- The Medicare drug plan provides information that the co-payment for someone who is covered by both Medicare and Medi-Cal is higher than the \$0 to \$5 amount set by Medicare (*note: most people with Medicare and Medi-Cal should have no more than a \$1(generic) or \$3(brand name) co-payment for their drugs and those in nursing facilities should have no co-pays*)
 - Pharmacies also can submit claims after the fact to Medi-Cal in order to reimburse a recipient for costs paid above the appropriate co-payment level. Recipients will still be responsible for the Medicare set copayment amount of \$0 to \$5 per prescription.

The revised DHS provider bulletin with complete billing instructions for pharmacies is available online at www.medi-cal.ca.gov or by calling 1-800-541-5555.

What Can Recipients Do To Get Emergency Drug Coverage From Medi-Cal?

If a client or individual you work with is eligible for both Medicare and full-scope Medi-Cal and is having difficulties obtaining their prescriptions or is being asked to pay more than \$0 to \$5 for their prescriptions (depending on their Medi-Cal category), you should advise them to do the following:

- Bring their Medi-Cal card and Medicare drug card or Medicare drug plan acknowledgement letter to the pharmacy to assist them in billing.
- Bring a copy of this notice, if they have one.
- Tell the pharmacist to go to the State of California Medi-Cal website to read the bulletin that describes the emergency drug coverage and billing process.
- Dual eligible recipients who have already paid more than the \$1 to \$5 copay should return to their pharmacy and ask that their prescription be reprocessed to obtain the correct copayment amount.