

How Seniors Benefit from the New Health Care Law

Reduces drug costs by phasing out doughnut hole – Provides a \$250 rebate in 2010 for seniors who fall in the doughnut hole. Beginning in 2011 seniors will receive a 50% percent discount on their prescription drugs when they fall in the doughnut hole and by 2020 the doughnut hole will be completely eliminated.

Covers Preventive Services – In 2011, seniors in Medicare will receive free annual check-ups. In addition, the law eliminates co-payments or cost-sharing for mammograms, colonoscopies and other preventive screenings.

Supports Early Retiree Coverage – Provides financial assistance to employer health plans that cover early retirees, bringing down health costs and premiums by as much as \$1,200 per family, per year for some plans.

Encourages Doctors to coordinate care and improve quality – Creates incentives for providers to work together to better serve patients and reduce wasteful care like repeated tests.

Removes Obstacles to Changing Part D Plan – Allows Part D enrollees to make a mid-year change in their enrollment if their current plan unexpectedly makes a change that result in higher cost for a drug they take.

Significantly Lowers Cost for Struggling Seniors –Expands the Medicare Part D low-income subsidy, which will dramatically help struggling seniors afford their health care costs.

Enacts CLASS Act creating a new option for long-term assistance for seniors and the disabled – Creates a new, voluntary, self-insured insurance program to help families pay for the costs of long-term supports and services if a loved one develops a disability. Also, creates new options for states to provide home and community based services in Medicaid, enabling more people with disabilities to access long-term services in the setting they choose.

Enacts the Elder Justice Act – Authorizes new criminal background checks on long-term care workers who have access to residents or patients and requires greater transparency of nursing homes, including public disclosure of the entities that own, govern, operate and profit from nursing homes. The law also requires better information about the quality of nursing care and improves complaint process.

Brings Savings to Medicare - By eliminating wasteful overpayments to Medicare Advantage plans and by creating new incentives for coordinated, high quality care across the health care spectrum, the law extends the solvency of the Medicare Trust Fund by 9 years and improves Medicare for generations to come.

[March 2010]

Provisions	Effective Date
\$250 Medicare Rebate for Individuals in Doughnut Hole	2010
Subsidies to Employers who Provide Coverage to Early Retirees (55 to 64)	2010
50 % Part D Drug Discount for those in Doughnut Hole	2011
Annual Free Checkups	2011
No Co-payments for Preventive Screenings	2011
Increases Medicaid Payments for Primary Care Physicians	2013
Doughnut Hole Eliminated	2020