

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES  
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services  
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## CENTER FOR BENEFICIARY CHOICES

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**July 11, 2006**

**Memorandum To:** All Part D Sponsors

**Subject:** Part D access for Medicare eligible children

**From:** Cynthia Tudor, Ph.D., Director, Medicare Drug Benefit Group

We have been notified of circumstances where Part D Sponsors are unaware of Part D eligibility for children. Reports have included situations of plan customer service representatives denying enrollment verification for children, or refusing to assist with an exception to provide access to a pediatric non-formulary item. CMS is concerned about such reports and wants to remind plans about this small, but vulnerable population of Medicare eligibles.

Generally, children under 20 years of age are only eligible for Medicare under the End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) provision of the law. These children either require regular dialysis or have received a kidney transplant. The total population of children entitled to the ESRD benefit is estimated at somewhere around 4,000 and most are also eligible for Medicaid.

Because many of these children maintain Medicaid eligibility before and after the ESRD benefit, we want to ensure that Part D Sponsors and States are working together to facilitate an appropriate transition of these patients and they do not experience any gaps in prescription drug coverage.

While formulary protections under Part D exist for children, such as the availability of all childhood vaccines, there are still some pediatric drugs and doses that will not necessarily be formulary products. We emphasize that plans must facilitate the exceptions and appeals for these Medicare eligible children and ensure that medically necessary medications are provided.

We will monitor the progress plans make in assisting these transitions and provide additional guidance where necessary.

We want to thank the plans in advance in giving this particularly important group of Medicare beneficiaries the attention they need to not only overcome this disease, but to enjoy a bright and healthy future.