

U.S. House and Senate Notification
Monday, February 14, 2011

To: Congressional Health Staff

From: Amy Hall
Director, Office of Legislation
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

Re: CMS Launches Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit Dashboard BETA

As part of the Obama Administrations' open data initiatives, the Centers of Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) today launched the Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit Dashboard BETA. This electronic tool is a beta release and offers statistical views of the Prescription Drug Event (PDE) data as it relates to drug costs and utilization as collected by CMS. Future releases may contain additional CMS Program data.

The new tool is available at [Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit Dashboard](#) .

This Dashboard is limited to Medicare covered drugs under the Part D prescription drug benefit program. Information in the dashboard is based on the PDE record that contains prescription drug cost and payment data elements that enables CMS to carry out the payment provisions of the Medicare Modernization Act (MMA). Plans that contract with CMS to provide qualified Part D prescription drug coverage must submit these data as a condition of payment. Every time a beneficiary fills a prescription under Medicare Part D, a prescription drug plan sponsor must submit a summary record called the PDE to CMS.

Plan payments are not based on the PDE but rather on prospectively determined amounts from Part D bids that are submitted by plan sponsors in the prior calendar year. Payments are made on a per-member per-month (PMPM) basis for each beneficiary enrolled in the plan.

The drug information that is presented as part of the Dashboard is useful for tracking trends in drug utilization and costs over time, and for understanding the relative importance of drugs in various drug classes and generic classifications. The data used in the Medicare Part D Drugs Dashboard BETA is grouped by calendar year, drug class, drug name, brand/generic, and is summarized by total costs and prescription fills. The Medicare Prescription Drug Dashboard data will be updated annually after payments are finalized through payment reconciliation. Please note that 2006 was the program's start-up year, and most beneficiaries who enrolled in the program did not have a full year of enrollment.

Please contact the CMS Office of Legislation with any questions.