



## ***BETTER BENEFITS – MORE CHOICES***

### ***Good News about the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement and Modernization Act of 2003!***

#### **Medication Therapy Management Provisions in the new Medicare Modernization Act:**

- ❖ The Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement and Modernization Act of 2003 (MMA) **requires plans offering the new Medicare drug benefit to have a program which will ensure the appropriate use of prescription drugs in order to improve outcomes and reduce adverse drug interactions.**
- ❖ This program pays **pharmacists to spend time counseling patients** and will be targeted at patients who:
  - Have multiple chronic conditions (such as asthma, diabetes, hypertension, high cholesterol and congestive heart failure);
  - Are taking multiple medications; and
  - Are likely to have high drug expenses.
- ❖ Developed in cooperation with pharmacists and physicians, the therapy management program will also be **coordinated with other chronic care management and disease management programs operating in other parts of Medicare.**

#### **Brown Bag Consults:**

- ❖ Therapy management sessions are sometimes referred to as “brown bag” consults, because patients are asked to gather all their medicines in a bag and bring them in for the pharmacist to review. They serve several purposes:
  - Lets the pharmacist see all the medications the patient is taking, so they can spot dangerous combinations of drugs and look for medication changes that might improve the patient's overall health.
  - Gives the pharmacist an opportunity to explain to the patient the proper way in which to take their medications and to suggest tools a patient might use to keep track of their drug regimen.
  - Lets the beneficiary ask questions and receive feedback from the pharmacist.
- ❖ Like the rest of the drug benefit, medication therapy management will be a new service for Medicare. Currently, a few state Medicaid programs reimburse pharmacists for providing these “cognitive services.” In Mississippi, for example, pharmacy management services are those provided by specially credentialed pharmacists for Medicaid recipients with specific chronic diseases including diabetes, asthma, high cholesterol, and coagulation disorders. In Medicare, the amount and structure of payment will be set by the plans offering the new Medicare Part D, according to requirements established by the Secretary of Health and Human Services in the coming years.