



Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Carolyn B. Maloney
M.C.
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TOWN HALLS ON MEDICARE DRUG PLAN MONDAY AND TUESDAY MARCH 6 AND 7, 2006

IN MANHATTAN MARCH 6, 2006

10:00 AM – 11:30 AM
Lenox Hill Neighborhood
House
331 East 70th Street
Manhattan
Please RSVP to
(212) 860-0606

1:00 PM – 2:30 PM
Kips Bay Court
Community Room
480 2nd Ave (btwn 27th
& 28th Sts)
Manhattan
Please RSVP to
(212) 860-0606

IN QUEENS MARCH 7, 2006

10:00 AM-11:30 AM
Selfhelp Queensview/
North Queensview NORC
21-15 34th Ave, Bldg 14
Long Island City
Please RSVP to
(212) 860-0606

WHERE TO GET HELP

The Office of Congresswoman
Carolyn B. Maloney
1651 3rd Avenue, Suite 311
New York, New York 10128-3679
(212) 860-0606

28-11 Astoria Boulevard
Astoria, New York 11102
(718) 932-1804

Walk-in centers:

Department for the Aging,
2 Lafayette Street, 6th Floor
Manhattan
Monday – Friday, 9 AM to 5 PM
(212) 341-3200

Empire Medicare Services,
800 2nd Avenue, Ground Floor
Manhattan
Monday – Friday, 9 AM to 3 PM
(212) 333-5511

By appointment only, for Manhattan residents:

ACES/Community Service
Society of New York
105 East 22nd Street
Manhattan
Monday – Wednesday, 10 AM to 4 PM
(212) 614-5310

Chinese American Planning Council
365 Broadway
Manhattan
Monday – Friday, 9 AM to 4 PM
(212) 431-7800

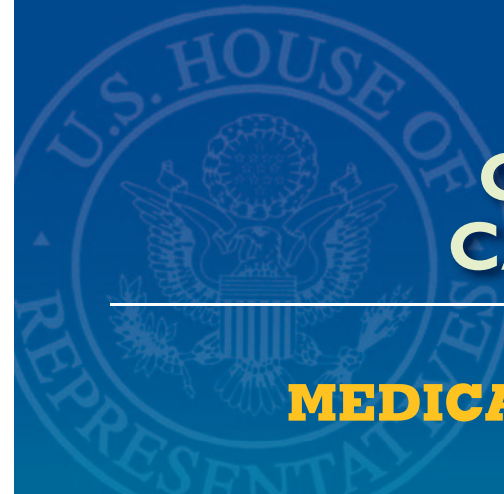
United Jewish Council of Poverty
235 East Broadway
Manhattan
Monday – Thursday, 9 AM to 2 PM
(212) 233-6037

By appointment only, for Queens residents:

Elmhurst Jackson Heights Senior
Center, 75-01 Broadway, 3rd Floor
Elmhurst
Monday – Friday, 9 AM to 4 PM
(718) 478-7171

Raices/Astoria Senior Center
21-21 30th Drive
Astoria
Monday – Friday, 9 AM to 4 PM
(718) 726-9642

Ridgewood-Bushwick Queens
Multi-Service Center
76-01 Myrtle Avenue
Glendale
Monday – Friday, 9 AM to 4 PM
(718) 366-0200



CONGRESSWOMAN CAROLYN MALONEY

SPECIAL REPORT ON MEDICARE'S NEW DRUG PLAN



February 2006

Dear Friend:

Over the past several months, my office has been inundated with phone calls from seniors who are overwhelmed by Medicare's new prescription drug benefit plan, which is why I had my staff hold information sessions at senior centers. In response to the increasing confusion surrounding the implementation of Medicare Part D, I will hold three town hall meetings to address questions about the new program.

I strongly opposed the law that created this program because I believed that the new drug benefit is inadequate, overly complex, and was set up to maximize profits for the pharmaceutical companies rather than maximizing help to seniors. I would have rather seen a simpler program, providing more help to those who need it.

That said, people need to be armed with the information necessary to make the best decision about whether to join and – if so – which plan may best meet their needs.

Whether you are a senior, a person with a disability, or someone trying to help, I encourage you to research the options BEFORE making a choice. Most people have until May 15, 2006 to sign up for a plan before late enrollment penalties apply, so take your time. I hope this newsletter helps you with these complicated choices.

Sincerely,

Carolyn B. Maloney
Carolyn B. Maloney



**TAKE YOUR
TIME**



**CHECK YOUR
FACTS**



**KNOW YOUR
OPTIONS**



IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS: THE NEW DRUG BENEFIT

Whether to enroll in a Medicare prescription drug plan depends upon your income, current drug costs, and what kind of coverage, if any, you have today.

If you have prescription drug coverage:

Check with your current provider about your options before doing anything. You should check to see if your current coverage is as good or better than Medicare, and if so, you do not need to do anything. If you drop your employer or union health coverage, you may not be able to rejoin it later and you may lose all your health benefits.

If you are on Medicaid and Medicare:

Your Medicaid drug coverage ended on December 31, 2005 and your new Medicare-based coverage should have begun on January 1, 2006, although many people reported problems. If you are unhappy with your current Medicare drug plan, you can change plans monthly. Your subsidy will continue as long as you pick a plan with average or below average premiums.

If you are enrolled in a Medicare Managed Care plan (such as Oxford, etc.):

Your plan should have sent you information about your options. If you want to stay with your current plan and it offers a prescription drug plan, you do not have to do anything.

If you do not want to remain in that plan, you may either enroll in a different Medicare Managed Care plan or return to traditional Medicare and select a private drug plan.

If you are enrolled in Elderly Pharmaceutical Insurance Coverage (EPIC):

You can enroll in a Medicare prescription drug plan now, but you would not be penalized if you decide to enroll later. Some seniors may pay a lower co-payment by using EPIC and Medicare together. Additionally, seniors approved for extra help will have their EPIC fees waived if they join a Medicare drug plan.

If you currently do not have prescription drug coverage:

Evaluate your needs and investigate your options, but remember monthly premiums will be higher if you do not enroll by May 15, 2006. You will also want to determine if you are eligible for help paying for Medicare drug coverage (see box).



EXTRA ASSISTANCE FOR PEOPLE WITH LIMITED INCOMES

Help with paying for Medicare drug plans is available for people with limited incomes. You may qualify for this assistance if:

Your monthly income is less than \$1,226 for an individual / \$1,651 for couples and you have limited assets.

If you think you may be in this category, you should call the Social Security Administration at 1-800-772-1213 or visit them online at www.socialsecurity.gov for more information.



Organizations that can help:

- Medicare: 1-800-MEDICARE (633-4227)
- Social Security Administration: 1-800-772-1213
- Elderly Pharmaceutical Insurance Coverage (EPIC): 1-800-332-3742
- Medicare Rights Center's LINC'S: Help applying for extra help 1-888-RX-LINC'S (1-888-795-4627)

Have the following personal information at hand when you call:

- Medicare identification number (on your Medicare card)
- Drugs you currently take, the dosage and what you pay for them
- Your refill schedule and preferred method of receiving prescriptions (at the pharmacy or via mail-order)
- Your annual income, and a basic accounting of your personal assets in case you qualify for low-income assistance

Informational Web Sites:

- Medicare: www.medicare.gov
- Social Security: www.ssa.gov/prescriptionhelp
- Medicare Rights Center: www.medicarights.org/drughelp.html



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