

November 2008

DCSD



Debt Counsel for Seniors & the Disabled

PATIENTS SEEK FINANCIAL AID TO BUY MEDICINE

As the slowing economy swells the ranks of the unemployed and uninsured more people are getting help from prescription drug assistance programs normally aimed at providing medications to the poorest Americans. Drug-assistance programs, long sponsored by pharmaceutical manufacturers, provide consumers with billions of dollars a year in free or low-cost drugs. To quality, patients must meet strict financial requirements. But as the economy weakens, a growing number of people are getting approved for programs to help them pay for high-price drugs. Many seniors and disabled may be able to take advantage of these programs if they apply.

HERE ARE SUGGESTIONS FOR GETTING HELP WITH PRESCRIPTION DRUGS!

Finding and navigating patient-assistance programs:

- www.needymeds.org lets patients search for applicable programs, download applications, search for local help with paperwork and find assistance based on location or disease.
- **Partnership for Prescription Assistance** (www.pparx.org, or 1-888-477-2669) helps match patients to more than 475 private and public programs with aid of an online tool. Has information on other types of assistance, such as help with copayments and premiums.
- www.RxAssist.org allows patients to search a database of patient-assistance programs by medication. It provides tip sheets on getting free or low-cost medications, information on copay, generic drug and other types of assistance programs.

Discount drug cards:

- **Together Rx Access:** Sponsored by nine major drug companies, this free card offers 20% to 40% discounts on retail prices for more than 300 drugs. www.togetherrxaccess.com or 1-800-444-4106.
- **Merck and Pfizer** offer separate discount cards for many of their medications. Discounts range from 15% to 50%. www.merckhelps.com/uninsured or www.pfizerhelpfulanswers.com.

Obtaining low-cost generic drugs:

- **Rx Outreach** offers more than 350 generic medications at a cost of \$20 to \$95 for 180-day supplies. www.rxoutreach.com or 1-800-769-3880.
- **Xubex Pharmaceutical Services** offers more than 250 generic medications at a cost of \$20 to \$30 for most 90-day supplies. www.xubex.com or 1-866-699-8239.

Wal-Mart, Target, Safeway and other retail chains offer many generic drugs at \$4 for a 30-day supply with no eligibility restrictions. Several chains have recently lowered prices on 90-day supplies to \$10 to \$15.

New Law Makes Changes to Reverse Mortgages

In addition to addressing the current housing crisis, the Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008 makes changes to reverse mortgages, including higher borrowing limits and protections from aggressive marketing.

A reverse mortgage allows a homeowner who is at least 62 years old to use the equity in his or her home to obtain a loan that does not have to be repaid until the homeowner moves, sells, or dies. The new law, which goes into effect October 1, 2008, increases the borrowing level on reverse mortgages. The national limit on the amount a homeowner can borrow will be \$417,000. The limit can be increased to \$625,000 in areas with high housing costs. The amount a homeowner can actually borrow depends on the home's value, location, interest rates, and the age of the borrower. Currently, the range in loan limits is between \$200,160 and \$362,790.

The new law also offers some protections for seniors. High fees aggressive marketing have been cited as problems with reverse mortgages. Under the new law, fees will be capped at 2 percent of the first \$200,000 borrowed and 1 percent on the balance, with a maximum of \$6,000 in fees. In addition, the law prevents lenders from requiring borrowers to purchase insurance, annuities, or other products as a condition for getting a reverse mortgage. Lenders are also prohibited from working with other professionals who are trying to sell seniors financial products as part of the lending process. For more information about Reverse Mortgages call Arthur Kohler, Met Life Reverse Mortgage Counselor Toll Free 1-888-753-8135

DCSD Telephone Directory

If you have any questions regarding your account, please call our toll free number:

1-800-992-3275

	Extension	Contact Person (s)	
Application	1300	Elizabeth	or Mindy
Additions to Existing Account	1300	Elizabeth	or Mindy
Billing	1500	Gaby	
Collections	1600	Mindy	
Creditors	1200	Mindy	or Betty
Legal Matters	1400	Veronica	or Leslie
Refer A Friend or a Family Member	1700	Sylvia	or Bonnie

PLEASE BE READY TO PROVIDE YOUR ACCOUNT NUMBER.

ADDRESS CHANGE REQUEST

Please provide information below only if the address information in the front is incorrect.

Name Client Account #

Street Address:

City, State, Zip Code

Home Phone: Area Code () -

Cell Phone: Area Code () -

IF YOUR IDENTITY IS STOLEN...

It's not uncommon for victims of ID theft to feel shock, anger, embarrassment and helplessness. To regain your balance, retake control...

Contact the security or fraud department at each of the compromised credit card companies or banks.

Place a fraud alert on your credit files, which can make it harder for an ID thief to open any credit accounts in your name. You just have to call one of the three major consumer reporting agencies- Equifax (800-525-6285)...(Experian (888-397-3742)... or Transunion (800-680-7289). The company you call is required to notify the other two on your behalf.

File a report with your local police or the police in the community where the fraud took place. Get a copy of the police report in case any creditors request proof of the crime.

Follow up your calls to your credit card issuers and banks with a letter outlining the fraudulent activity. You can use a company's fraud dispute form (contact the company to get one) or download the ID Theft Affidavit from the Federal Trade Commission at www.ftc.gov/bcp/online/pubs/credit/affidavit.pdf. Mail the letter, along with supporting information, such as a copy of the police report, to the address on the company's form or the address listed on your monthly statements for "billing inquiries." Send the material by certified mail, return receipt requested.