


CABHN FEVER

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Prescription Drug Coverage Medicare Part D & Medicaid or ConnPACE

 **Remember:** If you are a Medicaid or ConnPACE participant and are also enrolled in Medicare Part D, the State of Connecticut will pay for most prescription drugs that are not covered by your Medicare Part D Prescription Drug Plan. The Department of Social Services (DSS) will cover the cost of drugs that are not on your Medicare plan drug list (or "formulary") or that require prior authorization that has not been obtained from your Medicare plan. But your pharmacist must first get a rejection of a payment for a prescription from your Medicare plan, through his or her computer, and then submit the claim for payment to DSS by computer. **You should not have to leave the pharmacy without your prescription.**

If your pharmacist does not know

how to submit a rejected claim to DSS, the details are in Provider Bulletin 06-21 and the rules and procedure are also in the August, 2006 Connecticut Medical Assistance Program Newsletter p. 4.

If you still are unable to get your prescription paid for, ask the pharmacist for a print-out of what both the Part D plan and DSS say in refusing payment for the drug. Save these print-outs, and then contact either the Center for Medicare Advocacy (800-262-4414) or Statewide Legal Services (800-453-3320) for help.

Note: If you are on ConnPACE, you should never have to pay more than the ConnPACE maximum co-pay amount of \$16.25. If you are on Medicaid, there should be no co-pays, since DSS is required to cover all co-pays for Medicaid participants. ♦

September is Youth & Democracy Month!

Governor Jodi Rell has proclaimed September 2006 Youth and Democracy Month. During the month, Connecticut high schools are encouraged to conduct special activities with the goal of engaging young people in the democratic process. Schools will also have the opportunity to participate in the *2006/2007 Youth and Democracy Challenge* by developing a project to engage young people in their community. The winner will be invited to the State Capitol to receive an award from DemocracyWorks and their partners, the Connecticut State Department of Education, the Office of the Secretary of the State, the Connecticut Consortium for Law and Citizenship Education, and the League of Women Voters of Connecticut. For more information on Youth and Democracy Month and the Youth and Democracy Challenge, please visit <http://www.democracyworksct.org/youthanddemocracy.htm>, or call (860) 727-1157. ♦

 **National Essay Contest: The Campaign for Children's Health Care**

The Campaign for Children's Health Care is kicking off with a national essay contest for children and young adults. The topic is: *When an Apple a Day Isn't Enough*. The purpose of this contest is to give the nation's youth a voice on this important issue that affects their daily lives.

The contest begins on Tuesday, September 5th, 2006, and ends on Tuesday, October 31st, 2006. Essays must be received or postmarked by 11:59PM Eastern Time on October 31st.

For this contest, children and young adults ages 9-18 will be asked to explain how their ability to obtain the health services they need affects their

lives and the lives of those around them. Winners will be selected from two age groups in each state: 9-13 and 14-18.

Cash prizes range from \$250 for state winners to \$2,500 for Grand Prize winners. Winners also receive trips to Washington, DC and may attend an awards ceremony in February, 2007. A \$2,000 cash award for school supplies will be awarded to the school or group that submits the most entries.

To find rules and contest information, go to :

www.childrenshealthcampaign.org/events/national-essay-contest/ ♦

Library Voter Registration Week September 25th-29th

Connecticut public libraries are invited to participate in a week of activities to engage and inform residents and encourage voter participation. A series of workshops will be offered during this week on topics ranging from immigrant voting to restoring your right to vote.

For more information, contact Minaren Bozeman at (860) 727-1157 or Bozeman@democracyworksct.org

Medicare Part D Trainings

Come to a training in your area to learn about important state and federal changes to the Medicare Prescription Drug Program and prepare for Redetermination and Open Enrollment for 2007! The purpose of the trainings is to update the mental health and disability communities on state and federal changes to the program, the process and timeline for 2007, and several other issues specific to people with disabilities.

The training is focused on individuals with Medicare and Medicaid, people with Medicare and ConnPACE, and individuals eligible for low income subsidies.

Trainings by Region

Region 1: October 5, 2006 from 1:30 – 3:30pm at Laurel House- 1616 Washington Blvd. Stamford, CT 06902

Region 2: October 3, 2006 from 1-3pm at Lee Auditorium in Merrit Hall at CT Valley Hospital- Silver St. Middletown, CT 06457.

Region 3: September 28, 2006 from 1-3pm at Southeastern Mental Health Authority- 401 W. Thames St. Building 301, Norwich, CT 06360

Region 4: September 29, 2006 from 10-12am at Elmwood Community Center- 1106 New Britain Avenue, West Hartford, CT 06110

Region 5: October 4, 2006 from 1:30 – 3:30pm at Prime Time House, 810 Main St. Torrington, CT 06705.

The trainings will be facilitated by Pam Meliso, Attorney for the Center for Medicare Advocacy, Inc. For more information on how to register, email Alicia Woodsby at NAMI-CT publicpolicy@namict.org or call 1-800-215-3021. ♦

SSA Streamlining Appeals Process

On August 1, 2006, the Social Security Administration (SSA) implemented Disability Service Improvement (DSI), a new administrative process for settling Social Security and SSI disability claims. This process includes:

- (1) A Quick Disability Determination (QDD) for claims that can be granted within 20 days of the application,
- (2) elimination of the reconsideration stage of the appeals process. This stage is replaced by an appeal to a Federal Reviewing Official (FRO), followed by an Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) hearing if the FRO denies the claim, and
- (3) elimination of the right to request review by the Appeals Council in disability claims denied by ALJs. Appeal will be directly to District Court.

Please note: In the past, claimants were encouraged to seek legal representation after their reconsideration denial, **but now they should seek representation after their initial disability denial.** Also, disability applications filed prior to August 1, 2006, will follow the old administrative process, i.e., the cases will not go to an ALJ hearing until after the reconsideration denial.

SSA hopes that DSI will streamline the administrative appeals process. Initially, the process is only being implemented in the New England states in order to determine whether any adjustments needs to be made in the process. ♦



Head's Up On Energy Assistance

Energy assistance intake will be available early this year:

•The community action agencies will begin intake for energy assistance on Tuesday, Aug. 15th. Early applicants should contact the local CAA or Infoline to find out exactly which application sites are open as it is likely many volunteer sites will not be open this early.

•Eligibility and benefits will not be determined until after the energy assistance plan is approved (probably late September).

•Benefits will begin Nov. 1 — this means the program will only pay for deliveries of deliverable fuels like oil or propane made after Nov. 1. ♦

Healthy Minds, Healthy Bodies

Community Health Network of Connecticut, Inc. (CHNCT) is hosting **HealthyMinds, HealthyBodiesDay at the Learning Corridor at 43 Vernon Street, Hartford on Saturday, September 30 from 11am-3pm.** This event is free for families! So, put on your sneakers and join up for a Saturday afternoon full of activities for everyone. Learn a new dance, see a healthy cooking demonstration and participate in basketball and hula hoop contests! Win prizes, create unique crafts, and make new friends while learning about healthy minds and healthy bodies.

Local news personalities from NBC30, WFSB3 and WTHN Channel 8 and representatives from other participating organizations including CL&P, YMCA of Greater Hartford, the Boys and Girls Club of Hartford, the Sun Women's Basketball Team, Power Radio 104.1 and many more will be present! For more details, please contact Carly Newman at (203) 949-4044 or email at cnewman@chnct.org. ♦



“Waging a Living,” a new documentary, puts a human face on the growing economic squeeze that is forcing millions of workers into the ranks of the poor. An excellent educational resource, this film premiered on PBS 8/29/06 and is available for purchase at www.newvideo.com.



New Federal TANF Regulations Limit State Flexibility

On June 29, the federal Department of Health and Human Services issued “interim final” regulations implementing the new TANF provisions contained in the federal Deficit Reduction Act of 2005. The regulations, which become effective immediately, give states very little flexibility in designing programs to meet the higher federal work participation standards or the needs of families.

According to recent Connecticut Department of Labor (DOL) statistics, 37% of parents receiving TFA (cash welfare assistance) who are required to work got no further than 11th grade in school; 18% of eligible parents have limited math and reading skills; and

11% of parents have limited English skills.

The federal rules:

allow basic skills training only as a secondary activity that will count toward meeting federal participation requirements only after parents have worked 20 hours a week.

provide no special consideration when parents with a disability receiving cash assistance are working as much as they can given their disability.

except to a very limited extent, do not permit states to count parents who are participating in mental health or substance abuse treatment programs as meeting federal participation requirements.

permit vocational education to count as a primary work activity, although for a limited amount of parents for a limited amount of time.

define countable education activities narrowly and specifically exclude studying for baccalaureate and other advanced degrees.

The new federal law also continues to provide states with a “caseload reduction credit”. This credit reduces a state’s required participation rate if the number of families receiving cash assistance is reduced below the number receiving assistance in 2005. This effectively rewards states for reducing the number of families they serve, without requiring that families have jobs when they leave cash assistance.

New Income and Health Insurance Coverage Data

The U.S. Census Bureau released its annual findings about income, poverty and health insurance coverage at the end of August. Key findings from the U.S. Census Current Population Survey (CPS) include:

	Connecticut		United States	
	2005	2004	2005	2004
People in Poverty	326,000 (9.3%)	348,000 (10.0%)	37.0 million (12.6%)	37.0 million (12.7%)
Children in Poverty	103,000 (12.4%)	102,000 (12.2%)	12.9 million (17.6%)	13.0 million (17.8%)
Uninsured*	394,000 (11.3%)	407,000 (11.6%)	46.6 million (15.9%)	45.3 million (15.6%)
Uninsured Children	68,000 (8.2%)	71,000 (8.5%)	8.3 million (8.3%)	7.9 million (10.8%)

* “Uninsured” means having no insurance for the entire year.

Connecticut Voices for Children has also calculated changes in these areas in Connecticut over the past five years, using data from the CPS:

	2004/2005 (average)	2003/2004 (average)	2000/2001 (average)
People in Poverty	9.70%	9.10%	7.50%
Children in Poverty	12.30%	11.20%	9.30%
Uninsured*	11.30%	10.80%	10.00%
Uninsured Children	8.40%	8.40%	7.30%

For more data and analysis, with an emphasis on Connecticut information, see the Connecticut Voices for Children website, www.ctkidslink.org or, for national data and analysis, the Coalition for Human Needs website, www.chn.org.

"The State of Working Connecticut, 2006 "

taken from *The Connecticut Voices for Children* web-site

The rising tide of Connecticut's economic recovery is not lifting the boats of most workers in the state. The sixth annual State of Working Connecticut report finds that in recent years, low-, middle-, and high-wage workers have seen their real wages decline, even as the economy's productivity has increased. And while the state has slowly recovered a little more than half of the jobs it lost during the recession, it has been gaining lower-wage service sector jobs while losing higher-wage manufacturing and professional jobs.

For a copy of the full report from Connecticut Voices for Children, please go to: <http://www.ctkidslink.org/publications/SWCT2006fullreport.pdf>

Housing Conference

Save the date! Mark your calendar for the state's largest gathering of affordable housing practitioners and advocates. **"Housing 2006: Investing in our Future – The 2006 Annual Conference of the Connecticut Housing Coalition"** will be **Thursday, October 30** at the Mystic Marriott Hotel in Mystic, CT. If you are not already on the Coalition's mailing list, e-mail info@ct-housing.org or call (860) 563-2943. ♦

Tax Relief for the Working Poor

Join this Call to Action sponsored by the Greater Hartford Interfaith Coalition for Equity and Justice (GHICEJ) at the First Church of the Living God, Thursday, October 5, 6:30pm to 8:00pm, 70 Whitney Street, Hartford. For information, call GHICEG at 860-548-1744. ♦

CABHN Meetings held 1st Friday of the month

9:30 - 11:30 am

Upcoming Meeting: Friday, October 6

Community Renewal Team
(CRT)

555 Windsor St., Hartford

Topics:

State response to New TANF
Rules. Work for a State EITC
& Family Economic Security

The Connecticut Alliance for Basic Human Needs (CABHN) is a statewide network of individuals, community groups and organizations which supports and promotes advocacy on low-income issues. For more information, please call (860) 278-5688.

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Legal Assistance Resource Center of CT
and
CABHN (Connecticut Alliance for Basic Human Needs)
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