



MEDICARE PART D PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLAN

The Medicare Prescription Drug Plan enrollment period officially began on November 15, 2005. With the advent of the enrollment period comes a variety of issues that dually eligible consumers, their families and providers need to be aware of.

- ◆ Dually eligible consumers should have received a letter from CMS informing them of the plan they will be auto-assigned if they do not choose a plan by December 31, 2005. Providers should keep a listing of any dually eligible consumers who do not receive this letter. OMRDD will inform providers of how to handle this issue once they receive clarification from CMS.
- ◆ OMRDD will be sending providers a listing of the prescription drug plans dually eligible consumers are being auto-assigned. Currently, they are waiting to receive this information from DOH.
- ◆ The Plan Finder (entitled “Compare Medicare Prescription Drug Plans”) is now fully functional on the

www.medicare.gov website. This tool will enable individuals to input personal information (including medications used), that will result in a listing of the plans that best meet the needs for that individual.

- ◆ The new OMRDD regulation regarding who can enroll persons served by OMRDD in a Medicare Part D prescription drug plan is available on the following website (www.omr.state.ny.us).
- ◆ We have developed a Medicare Part D e-mail group to quickly update Affiliates regarding new developments with Medicare Part D. If you would like to be added to this e-mail group, please contact Deb Williams by e-mail at dwilliams@cerebralpalsynys.org.

We will keep you updated as new information becomes available. If you have any questions, please contact Deb Williams at the Affiliate Services Office.

UPDATE – PSYCHOTHERAPY BY SOCIAL WORKERS IN ARTICLE 28 D&Ts

The NYS Department of Health’s planned emergency regulations regarding psychotherapy services by licensed social workers in Article 28 D&Ts were recently withdrawn from the November 17, 2005 meeting of the State Hospital Review and Planning Council (SHRPC). Although the regulation attempted to permit payment of psychotherapy services by licensed social workers, the regulation also prohibited group therapy and artificially capped all psychotherapy visits to 15% of the clinic’s total volume. CP of NYS had prepared comments to the members of SHRPC identifying concerns with the regulation’s language. CP of NYS will proceed with presenting those concerns to the Governor’s Office and the OMRDD/DOH Article 28 Provider Council.

For more information, please contact Joanne Genovese at the Affiliate Services Office.

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SUMMIT ON NEW YORK EDUCATION

The NYS Board of Regents convened a Summit on Education on November 2, 2005 at the Empire State Plaza Convention Center, Albany. Leaders from the education, business and community organization sectors were in attendance. The presentations and discussions focused on the ongoing need to continue to close the achievement gaps that exist from early childhood through postsecondary education while also raising the performance of the entire system to the level needed to sustain the state's economy in the face of global competition.

The keynote presentations – *Framing the Educational Challenge and the Imperative for Systems Change* by Kati Haycock, President, “The Education Trust” and *Building Sustained Public Support for Educational Reform* by Gaston Caperton, President, the College Board and former governor of West Virginia – were moderated by David Gergen, Director, Center for Public Leadership, Kennedy School of Government and former adviser to four U.S. Presidents. The second keynote presentation – *Meeting the Global Challenge through Education and Innovation* by Nicholas Donofrio, Executive Vice President for Innovation and Technology, IBM – was moderated by George Campbell, Jr., President, Cooper Union.

Table discussions were also held in the afternoon session among summit participants that focused on the following aims or goals established by the Regents which emanated from several statewide forums:

- Every child will get a good start.
- Every child will be reading by the second grade.
- Everyone will complete middle level education ready for high school.
- Everyone will graduate from high school ready for work, higher education and citizenship.
- People who begin higher education will complete their programs.
- People of all ages who seek more knowledge and skill will have the fullest opportunity to continue their education.

Discussion leaders and recorders were designated at each table and participants were asked to address the following questions.

- Do you support the joint aims?
- Do you agree the current achievement levels are insufficient?
- Are these the essential actions we will take together to accomplish our aims?

- What will you and your organization do?
- What must we do to enable joint venture? What will get in our way? What will we do to overcome the problem?

The results of these discussions should be published on the State Education Department's web site at some point in the future. For more detailed information on the Summit, go to the following website (<http://usny.nysed.gov/summit/index.html>) or contact Dan Tworek at the Affiliate Services Office.

CP OF NYS FAMILY SENDS HELP TO HURRICANE VICTIMS

Cerebral Palsy Associations of New York State (CP of NYS) and its Affiliates across the state have collected supplies and money to assist people with disabilities in areas affected by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Enough Durable Medical Equipment (DME) – such as walkers, canes, wheelchairs, crutches and commodes – to fill a 50-foot truck was sent to United Cerebral Palsy of Middle Tennessee in Nashville to be distributed to people along the Gulf Coast. A truck donated by the Teamsters Union Local 294 in Albany was loaded at the CP of NYS Koicheff Health Care Center in Staten Island on Saturday, November 12. CP of NYS Affiliates in Rochester, Niagara Falls, Syracuse, Elmira, Albany, Roosevelt and Kingston have collected equipment and supplies needed by people with disabilities in the affected region. The truck, which was arranged through the efforts of the Center for the Disabled in Albany, also made pickups in Albany and Syracuse before going on to Nashville on November 20.

United Cerebral Palsy of Houston and similar agencies in the areas affected by Hurricane Katrina requested help in securing DME to assist those who have lost their equipment in the aftermath of the hurricanes. UCP of Middle Tennessee and other agencies have been assisting in the effort. Gary Grimaldi, occupational therapist and Director of Rehabilitation Services at CP of NYS, also contacted several Occupational Therapy schools in the New York Metropolitan region. He asked colleges and universities to participate in this humanitarian endeavor by collecting quality DME for the relief effort. The response was overwhelming. New York University, Columbia University, Dominican College, the New York City Board of Education, as well as equipment vendors, and other private donors were among those who participated in this effort. The items donated in the New York City region alone filled two 24-foot long trucks. CP of NYS staff collected, packaged and prepared the equipment for shipment by ground and air. Continental Airlines agreed to fly some of the equipment to Baton Rouge for distribution

by agencies in the region. Students at Dominican College and employees at CP of NYS and its Affiliates have also donated money to help both workers and people with disabilities served by UCP agencies in the Gulf Coast. The Board of Directors of CP of NYS authorized a generous gift to create the cash fund to benefit people who lost their jobs and their homes in the hurricanes.

Drive Medical Design and Manufacturing, in Port Washington, NY, donated more than 100 wheelchairs to the effort. The company set up a promotion with home health care dealers in New York State. For each chair they purchased during a certain period, Drive donated a chair to the effort. The final total was 138 chairs. Jeff Schwartz and Harvey Diamond, the owners of Drive Medical, conceived the idea and promoted it to their customers. Wil Fraser, the Vice President of Corporate Accounts, coordinated the distribution to UCP Mobile and UCP Baton Rouge with CP of NYS.

Our sincere thanks to everyone who participated in this unique effort to help people with disabilities and those who work with them.

A LOOK BACK AT THE CP OF NYS ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The 45th Annual Conference of Cerebral Palsy Associations of New York State (CP of NYS) brought nearly 900 people from across the state to Albany, October 24-26 to exchange ideas and view new technologies affecting the lives of people with disabilities. This year's Conference, entitled "Teamwork – The Key to Success," included nearly 50 sessions and meetings dealing with a wide range of issues. Representatives from state agencies also addressed Conference attendees on new initiatives.

John J. Pelizza, Ph.D., an authority on wellness, change process, productivity, team building and personal growth, delivered a high-energy Keynote Address that set the tone for the entire Conference. If you are interested in contacting Dr. Pelizza, or any of the presenters, or would like copies of information packets distributed by a particular speaker, please call the Affiliate Services Office at (518) 436-0178.

More than 20 vendors displayed products and services for people with disabilities on Tuesday, October 25. There were also new techniques, ideas and programs displayed at the popular Poster Sessions during the afternoon on Tuesday. The highlight of the Poster Session displays was artwork submitted by consumers from across the state for the second annual *Visions of New York* Consumer Art Contest. A full-

color poster with all 18 pieces of original art was displayed and sold at the Conference. Posters are still available by calling the Affiliate Services Office.

Eleven individuals and organizations were honored for their accomplishments or for service to people with disabilities at the CP of NYS Annual Awards Banquet on Monday, October 24. The next night nearly 60 employees from 20 Affiliates and CP of NYS were honored for outstanding service at the Celebrate Staff Awards Dinner. More than 450 people attended each night. A special video produced by CP of NYS commemorating our unique 40-year relationship with the New York State Elks Association, was shown at the Monday night dinner.

The 2006 CP of NYS Annual Conference will be held October 23-25. The Desmond Hotel and Conference Center in Albany will host the event for the 16th consecutive year.

The CP of NYS Annual Conference is sponsored in part by The Irwin Siegel Agency and Citicorp.

SAVE THE DATE



Tuesday, March 7

**2006 CP of NYS
Albany Lobby Day**

*Happy
Thanksgiving!*