

## Informational Update Vol 15 #2    February 25, 2024

### 1. Medicare Part D Drug Costs - 2024

The GHI-enhanced Medicare Part D drug plan in 2023 still consists of 3 stages. Starting Jan 1, 2024, you start over again in stage 1, no matter what stage you ended in on December 31, 2023. In stage I, you pay 25% of the drug cost while the plan (GHI enhanced Plan D) pays the other 75%.

If your total drug cost (what you and your plan both pay) exceeds **\$5,030** (up \$371 from 2023) at some point in 2024, you enter Stage II, formerly known as the donut hole. Fortunately, the donut hole has closed for both generic and non-generic drugs; you continue to pay the same 25% of the drug cost while your plan pays 75%. In addition, insulin costs \$35 for a 30-month supply and there is no cost for most vaccines, including shingles.

If your true out-of-pocket expense – known as TrOOP – for both Stages I & II exceed **\$8,000** (up \$600 from 2023) you enter Stage III, or the Catastrophic Coverage. In this stage, ***THERE IS NO CO-PAYMENT***, which was 5% of the drug cost in 2023. Who pays for the drug cost? Medicare pays 80% and the plan pays 20% of the drug cost.

### 2. “Valentine’s Gift”

If you are Medicare eligible and have a NYC prescription drug coverage (like GHI Enhanced Plan D) the CSA Welfare Fund will send your “Valentine’s” gift of \$480 (\$40 a month) for 2023 this month (got mine today) via a check.

The “Valentine’s” gift is a CSA Welfare Fund benefit designed to help defray the cost of the High Option Rider that pays for your Part D coverage. In 2023, the Rider costs \$125 (\$120 in 2024) for an individual,

and \$250 (\$240 in 2024) if you have a dependent. The Rider cost is deducted from your pension.

If you were eligible for the “Valentine’s Gift,” but were not on Medicare for the full year, you should receive a prorated check. The prorate is \$40 a month for every month on Medicare.

Please note that only *Medicare-eligible CSA retirees* are entitled to the “Valentine’s” gift; *non-CSA Medicare-eligible* people are not. If both husband and wife are *Medicare-eligible CSA retirees*, then both are entitled to the \$480 providing **EACH** has their own NYC medical coverage. If one member is covering the other member, then only the member who is covering is entitled to the \$480.

For *non-Medicare CSA retirees and non-Medicare dependent spouses*, the CSA Welfare Fund and CSA Retiree Chapter will continue to cover co-pays, provided the member and spouse are under the GHI or City HMO plans. After a \$100 deductible, the reimbursement is 80% of the drug cost up to a maximum of \$10,000. In addition, the CSA Retiree Chapter automatically (no filing of a claim necessary) supplements this reimbursement with an additional 20% of the Fund payment.

### **3. Cardiovascular disease**

Cardiovascular disease is any disease that involves the heart and/or blood vessels, and, if not treated, can lead to a heart attack or stroke. Cardiovascular disease reduction risk visits to your participating primary care provider (PCP) can either prevent the disease or detect it.

Medicare Part B covers an annual cardiovascular disease reduction risk visit. Generally, Part B will cover 100% of the Medicare-approved amount. This means if you are eligible, you pay nothing. During your visit, the doctor may discover that he or she needs to treat you or investigate further. This is additional care is diagnostic and Medicare may bill you for it during the preventative visit.

You must be competent, alert, and on Medicare to be eligible for the cardiovascular risk reduction visit. You do not have to show any symptoms of the disease.

#### **4. Question of the Month**

Q. I just bought hearing aids from Costco. Am I entitled to any reimbursement?

A. I'm happy to say you are. Every 3 years you are entitled to receive up to \$800 from the CSA Welfare Fund and up to \$800 from the CSA Retiree Chapter. You need to complete a voucher to obtain the benefit. You can get a voucher by either calling (212-823-2020) or writing the Fund (CSA Retiree Welfare Fund, 40 Rector St., 12<sup>th</sup> Floor, New York, NY 10006), or you can submit a request through the CSA Welfare Fund website.