



Prescription drug cards available in Utica, NYM

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UTICA, November 5, 2009 -- Two local mayors have implemented a program they say will make prescription drugs more affordable in their respective municipalities.

Utica Mayor Dave Roefaro and New York Mills Mayor Robert Maciol announced that cards will be available for citizens to save between five and 40 percent on their prescriptions. They said the program would apply to all people-- and even pets -- and the cards are redeemable at the pharmacies in Utica and New York Mills.

"While we're focusing on seniors today, anyone is eligible to get one of these cards," Maciol said. "You just have to put your name on it. The best part is, it will cost the municipality nothing and, at a time when the economy is rough, it won't put a burden on taxpayers."

The program, which already exists in Ilion is provided by Envision Medical Solutions. Envision has a network of pharmacies across the country that accept the cards, and with the large consumer pool, are able to offer lower rates for prescriptions.

Maciol and Roefaro say they learned of the program at a conference of New York mayors and they hope other local municipalities will follow suit. The cards can be used with or without insurance plans and the pharmacies will present consumers with the lowest possible price using the card.

New York Mills will make the cards available at the Municipal Building, the Village Library and will be delivering them door-to-door to residents. Utica will make the cards available at the Parkway Senior Center, the city clerk's office at City Hall and the Utica Public Library. The cards will be available beginning today. They will also be mailed out with water bills.

"This is personal for me because my mother-in-law was paying \$2,000 a month for prescriptions," Roefaro said. "Now, she would get reimbursed, but to have to come up with that type of money to put up is very difficult and we understand that."