



CHARLIE CRIST
GOVERNOR

STATE OF FLORIDA

Office of the Governor

THE CAPITOL
TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA 32399-0001

www.flgov.com
850-488-7146
850-487-0801 fax

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

APRIL 6, 2010

CONTACT:

GOVERNOR'S PRESS OFFICE, (850) 488-5394

Governor Crist Announces Expansion of Florida Discount Drug Card Access to All Florida Residents

~ All Florida residents eligible regardless of age, income status ~

www.FloridaDiscountDrugCard.com

TALLAHASSEE – Governor Charlie Crist today announced the Florida Discount Drug Card, initially offered to qualifying seniors or low-income families and individuals beginning in December 2007, is now available to all Florida residents. Florida residents who meet the original qualifying criteria are eligible for additional savings in the form of manufacturer rebates. The Governor praised the expansion of the successful market-based initiative to increase access to affordable health care coverage in Florida.

“Florida remains committed to increasing access to affordable health care and finding innovative solutions to achieve this goal,” said Governor Crist. “The Florida Discount Drug Card has been proven to be a low-cost solution for families and seniors in need of affordable prescription drugs, and now we are rightly extending the savings to all Florida residents. I urge Floridians to sign up to begin receiving discounts on their prescription drugs.”

All Florida residents now qualify: no age limit, no income requirements. There are no waiting periods to receive the card, no pre-existing condition restrictions, no membership fees and the card instantly activates. Previously, to sign up for the program, participants had to be age 60 to 64 and without prescription drug coverage; or individuals, families and seniors under age 60, without prescription-drug coverage, and have an annual income of less than 300 percent of the Federal Poverty Level to qualify. These participants are still eligible and can now receive additional savings when purchasing their prescription drugs with the card. For participants under age 60, qualifying annual incomes for the additional savings are as follows:

- \$32,490 for an individual
- \$43,710 for a family of two
- \$66,150 for a family of four
- Income limits for other family sizes are available on the Web site, www.FloridaDiscountDrugCard.com.

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Participants who qualify for additional savings will be able to download a temporary card directly from the Florida Discount Drug Card Web site and will receive a physical card by mail for a small, one-time \$1.50 activation fee which is only added to the cost of the first prescription. The temporary downloaded card activates within three hours.

Requesting a Florida Discount Drug Card is easy, and there is no sign-up fee for the card. Printable cards can be downloaded for free directly from the Florida Discount Drug Card Web site upon sign-up. Participants have the option of requesting a physical card to be mailed directly to a home or office for a small, one-time \$1.50 activation fee which is assessed when purchasing the first prescription. Floridians can request a Florida Discount Drug Card by visiting www.FloridaDiscountDrugCard.com or by calling 1-866-341-8894 or TTY 1-866-763-9630. Information on the Web site is available in English, Spanish and a Creole version will be available soon. Multilingual drug card service representatives are available by calling the toll-free number.

More than 60,000 pharmacies are participating nationwide. If the pharmacy's usual and customary price is lower than the Florida Discount Drug price, the customer will pay the lower price. Additionally, if the customer qualifies for any other prescription discounts, they will always pay the lowest price. If a consumer learns a pharmacy is not enrolled in the program, it can be enrolled on a temporary basis, so the consumer can immediately take advantage of the discount. A 24-hour pharmacy helpline is available to assist with pharmacy enrollment. Once the pharmacy has signed a contract, it can permanently join the program. The Florida Discount Drug Card Web site provides an easy-to-use pharmacy locator tool, as well as a drug pricing index.

No tax dollars are used to make the Florida Discount Drug Card available. A public-private partnership with Envision Pharmaceutical Services (EPS) makes the discounts possible. EPS pharmacy benefits manager secures volume discounts on prescription drugs, passing savings onto consumers. Participating pharmacies must agree to the negotiated prices.

As of March 2010, prior to the expansion, Governor Charlie Crist announced that more than 135,000 Floridians had signed up for the Florida Discount Drug Card since its launch on December 20, 2007. With over 374,000 prescriptions filled, participants saved \$6 million in prescription-drug costs.

Additional Health Care Benefits for Floridians

Other partnerships with the private sector have also provided health care benefits for Floridians in the form of *Cover Florida* Health Care and the Florida Medicaid Health Information Network.

***Cover Florida* Health Care**

Cover Florida Health Care offers affordable, quality health insurance coverage and access to uninsured Floridians age 19 to 64. In its first two years of availability, more than 5,200 Floridians have enrolled in *Cover Florida* Health Care. Approximately 82 percent of enrollees have chosen catastrophic coverage, and 18 percent have chosen preventive coverage.

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Florida and United Healthcare are available in all 67 Florida counties with additional insurers available in Broward, Miami-Dade, Volusia, and Flagler counties. Each plan has a robust set of benefit options that include coverage for preventive services, screenings, office

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visits, as well as office surgery, urgent care, hospital coverage, emergency care, prescription drugs, durable medical equipment, and diabetic supplies.

For more information about *Cover Florida*, visit www.CoverFloridaHealthCare.com.

Florida Medicaid Health Information Network

The *Florida Medicaid Health Information Network* is improving the quality of health care for Florida's Medicaid recipients by allowing Medicaid providers real-time access to health information on their Medicaid patients. Medicaid recipients authorize access to the information and can revoke that permission later if they choose. The program helps health care providers make better-informed decisions about their patients by providing access to up to 18 months of Medicaid claims history. Florida is the first state in the nation to make this information available to its Medicaid providers at no cost.

Created without cost to Florida's taxpayers, the information network is made available via a secure portal through a partnership with the private sector. Available information includes Medicaid claims data about office visits and hospitalizations, diagnoses, procedures, and medication and medical exam history. Similar records from other payers may also be accessed. This innovation equips health care professionals with more complete information at the time of service, helps improve coordination by avoiding duplication of tests and encourages preventive care.

For more information, visit www.fhin.net and click on the Florida Medicaid Health Information Network link.

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