

Related Change Request (CR) #: N/A

Medlearn Matters Number: SE0443 (REVISED)

Related CR Release Date:

Related CR Transmittal #:

Effective Date: Immediately

Implementation Date: Immediately

MMA - Medicare Replacement Drug Demonstration

IMPORTANT: This is an updated version of this article. The article has been revised to reflect two additional drugs (Somavert and Mesnex) that are covered under this demonstration, as noted in the revised table that starts on page 4, and to announce that there are still many enrollment slots available. It is not too late to request or submit an application!

We need your help to reach beneficiaries who could benefit from this demonstration. These beneficiaries include people who have been diagnosed with rheumatoid arthritis, multiple sclerosis, osteoporosis, pulmonary hypertension, secondary hyperparathyroidism, Paget's Disease, Hepatitis C, CMV retinitis, or certain kinds of cancer. If you treat Medicare beneficiaries who currently use or could benefit from the drugs listed in the table starting on page 4, Medicare may be able to help them pay for these drugs.

Provider Types Affected

All Medicare physicians and providers but we are especially interested in reaching out to physician specialists in family practice, internal medicine, geriatrics, rheumatology, oncology and neurology, as well as pharmacists, nurse practitioners, hospital outpatient departments, cancer and infusion centers, and group practice administrators.

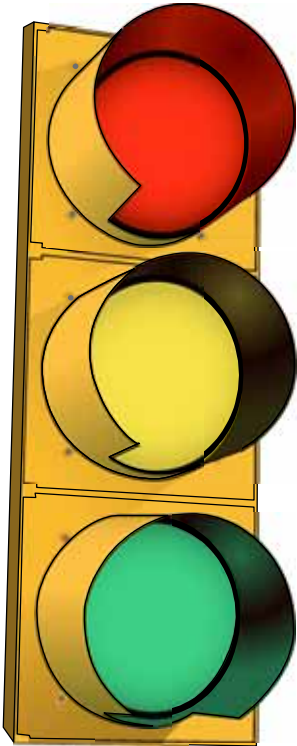
Provider Action Needed

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STOP – Impact to You

A new demonstration mandated under Section 641 of the Medicare Modernization Act allows up to 50,000 people with Medicare who have certain life-threatening diseases to obtain specified drugs they can take themselves at home for their condition.

**CAUTION – What You Need to Know**

A signed physician certification will need to be filled out for any of your patients who are:

applying to participate in this demonstration. By signing this certification, you are certifying that the patient has the condition indicated and you have prescribed or intend to prescribe a coverable drug for this condition in accordance with the demonstration requirements. Your signed certification is necessary for the patient's application to participate in the demonstration to be considered complete. **For your convenience, physician certification forms may also be faxed to (410) 683-2933.** Please note that nurse practitioners who write prescriptions for these coverable drugs may also sign the certification form.

GO – What You Need to Do

Review the list below of coverable conditions and drugs available under this demonstration. If you have any patients you think might be interested and eligible to apply, **let them know**. Be aware that both Fee-for-Service and Medicare Advantage beneficiaries are eligible to apply for the demonstration. If they would like to request an application or have any questions related to the demonstration, or need assistance completing the application, they can call a toll-free number: 1-866-563-5386 (TTY number: 1-866-563-5387). There is also helpful information on our web site (www.medicare.gov), including an application package that can be downloaded.

Note to Hospitals: Please share this information with staff who come into contact with Medicare beneficiaries who may be eligible for this demonstration (e.g., social workers or staff who assist with Medicaid eligibility determinations).

Background

The Medicare Replacement Drug Demonstration is a time-limited Medicare demonstration that will cover certain drugs and biologicals that are prescribed as replacements for existing covered Medicare drugs and biologicals before Medicare's prescription drug program begins in 2006. This demonstration was authorized by Section 641 of the Medicare Modernization Act.

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The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has contracted with TrailBlazer Health Enterprises, a Medicare carrier, to assist in implementing the demonstration. TrailBlazer will manage the eligibility determination and enrollment process as well as coordinate outreach efforts to beneficiary advocacy groups, physicians, and others interested in this demonstration. TrailBlazer has sub-contracted with Caremark to administer the drug benefit.

Medicare realizes the important role drugs play in treating serious diseases. When Medicare first began, drugs played a much smaller role in medical care. Only drugs that are administered in a physician's office have been covered under Medicare Part B. In recent years, many new medications have been developed that replace some of these drugs, allowing patients with serious and life-threatening illnesses to take these drugs in their own home. For a beneficiary to be eligible for this demonstration, he or she must meet the following criteria:

- Beneficiary must have Medicare Part A and Part B.
- Medicare must be the beneficiary's primary health insurance.
- Beneficiary must reside in one of the 50 states or the District of Columbia.
- Beneficiary must have a signed certification form from his/her doctor stating that he/she has prescribed or intends to prescribe for the beneficiary one of the covered medications for the specified condition.
- The beneficiary may not have any other insurance that has comprehensive drug coverage (such as Medicaid, an employer or union group health plan, or TRICARE) that would cover this medication.

The table below shows the drugs and conditions that will be covered under the demonstration.

DRUGS COVERED UNDER THE MEDICARE REPLACEMENT DRUG DEMONSTRATION

(updated August 9, 2004)

Demonstration Covered Indication	Drug/Biological—Compound Name (Brand Name)
Rheumatoid Arthritis	Adalimumab (Humira)
	Anakinra (Kineret)
	Etanercept (Enbrel)
Multiple Sclerosis	Glatiramer acetate (Copaxone)
	Interferon beta –1a (Rebif, Avonex)
	Interferon beta –1b (Betaseron)
Osteoporosis (patient must be homebound)	Calcitonin – nasal (Miacalcin – nasal)
Pulmonary Hypertension	Bosentan (Tracleer)

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Demonstration Covered Indication	Drug/Biological—Compound Name (Brand Name)
Secondary Hyperparathyroidism	Doxercalciferol (Hectoral)
Paget's Disease	Alendronate (Fosamax)
	Risedronate (Actonel)
Hepatitis C	Pegylated interferon alfa-2a (Pegasys)
	Pegylated interferon alfa-2a (PEG-Intron)
CMV Retinitis	Valcyte (Valganciclovir)
Acromegaly	Pegvisomant (Somavert)
Anti-Cancer	
Cutaneous T-cell Lymphoma	Bexarotene (Targretin)
Non-small cell lung cancer	Gefitinib (Iressa)
Epithelial ovarian cancer	Altretamine (Hexalen)
Chronic Myelogenous Leukemia	Imatinib Mesylate (Gleevec)
GI Stromal Tumor	Imatinib Mesylate (Gleevec)
Multiple Myeloma	Thalidomide (Thalomid)
Breast Cancer	Hormonal therapy
Stage 2-4 only	Anastrozole (Arimidex)
	Exemestane (Aromasin)
	Letrozole (Femara)
	Tamoxifen (Nolvadex)
	Toremifene (Fareston)
Prophalactic agent to reduce ifosfamide-induced hemorrhagic cystitis	Mesna-oral tablest (Mesnex)

For more information on this demonstration, please visit www.medicare.gov or call our toll-free number: 1-866-563-5386 (TTY number: 1-866-563-5387) between 8 am and 7:30 pm Eastern time, Monday – Friday. You can also use the toll-free number if you have questions about the demonstration or the application. We also have a beneficiary brochure available that describes the demonstration and its benefits. Copies of the brochure can be requested at:

outreach.mrdd@trailblazerhealth.com

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