



# MARYLAND PHARMACY PROGRAM

Medicaid - Pharmacy Assistance – Pharmacy Discount

No. 6

Friday, January 30, 2004

## **ADVISORY**

In an effort to give timely notice to the pharmacy community concerning important pharmacy topics, the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's (DHMH) *Maryland Pharmacy Program* (MPP) has developed the **Maryland Pharmacy Program Advisory**. To expedite information timely to the pharmacy and prescriber communities, an email network has been established which incorporates the email lists of the Maryland Pharmacists Association, EPIC, Long Term Care Consultants, headquarters of all chain drugstores and prescriber associations and organizations. It is our hope that the information is disseminated to all interested parties. If you have not received this email through any of the previously noted parties or via DHMH, please contact the MPP representative at 410-767-5395.

### Changes in Estimated Acquisition Cost & PDL Compliance Issue

#### **Changes to Estimated Acquisition Cost of Drugs**

Effective February 1, 2004, the Department will revise the method used to determine the estimated acquisition cost (EAC) for the drug portion of prescriptions paid under the Maryland Medicaid Pharmacy Program, the Maryland Pharmacy Assistance Program and the Maryland Pharmacy Discount Program. The new method to determine the EAC will be the lowest of the Average Wholesale Price minus twelve percent (AWP-12), Wholesale Acquisition Cost plus eight percent (WAC+8), Direct Price plus eight percent or the Distributor's price plus eight percent. Questions concerning this pricing change should be directed to the Division of Pharmacy Services 410-767-1455.

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## **PDL Pharmacy Compliance Issue**

Following the establishment of the PDL, First Health Services Corporation implemented the preauthorization call center for physicians to obtain approval for non-preferred drugs. A separate recipient telephone hotline was created to assist recipients when they are having problems obtaining needed medications. Unfortunately, pharmacy providers have been giving recipients a print-out of the denial screen for a non-covered PDL drug with the First Health preauthorization call center number printed on it. Recipients have been calling the preauthorization call center number and inappropriately occupying the phone lines so that physicians' PDL preauthorizations are unnecessarily delayed.

Please do **NOT** print and give copies of the denial screens to the recipient. The pharmacist should contact the prescriber. If the prescriber is unavailable, the pharmacist is to contact First Health at the preauthorization number to obtain authorization to dispense an emergency supply of the non-preferred drug.

**If recipients need assistance, they may call the Recipient Maryland Pharmacy Access Hotline at 1-800-492-5231.**

## **For Additional Information about the Maryland Pharmacy Program**

To obtain current and additional information, please feel free to visit the following websites:

Department of Health and Mental Hygiene <http://www.dhmh.state.md.us/mma/mpap/prefdruglist.html>

Provider Synergies <http://providersynergies.com>

First Health Services Corporation <http://mdmedicaidrx.fhsc.com>

If you have inquiries regarding this Advisory, please contact the Department at 410-767-1455.