

Cherokee Regional Medical Center
300 Sioux Valley Drive
Cherokee, Iowa 51012

PRESS RELEASE

CONTACT:

Kent Lundquist
(712)225-3368 ext. 259
klundquist@cherokeermc.org

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MEDICARE CHANGES FOR 2013

Important changes are taking place for Iowans on Medicare in 2013. “Some of the most significant changes relate to mental health coverage,” says Kris Gross from the state of Iowa’s Senior Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP).

People with Medicare Part B will now pay less out of pocket for outpatient mental health treatment. The co-payment is now 35%, down from 50%.

Medicare Part D (prescription drug) plans are now allowed to cover benzodiazepine and barbiturate medications, such as those used to treat chronic mental disorders, as well as cancer and epilepsy. Prior to this year, Medicare did not pay for these prescription drugs.

People with Medicare Part D plans will also see a greater discount for their medications once they reach the coverage gap or “donut hole.” The discount has increased from 50% in 2012, to 52.5% for brand-name medicines your plan covers, and from 14% in 2012 to 21% for generic medicines, in 2013. These discounts will be applied automatically at the pharmacy or by the mail-order supplier.

Those with Original Medicare will begin to see newly-designed, easier to understand quarterly Medicare summary notices starting later this year. The language is simpler, the print is larger, and there are clear definitions right on the form. There are also step-by-step instructions to check the form’s accuracy, appeal anything that is wrong, or report potential fraud. The new forms will be phased in between February and June.

Medicare premiums and deductibles have increased slightly in 2013. The Part B premium for most people in 2013 is \$104.90 per month, up \$5, and the annual Part B deductible is \$147, an increase of \$7, compared to 2012. The Part A deductible, if you are admitted to a hospital, is \$1,184, an increase of \$28.

If you have questions about Medicare contact SHIIP, a free, confidential service of the state of Iowa that does not sell, endorse or promote any insurance products. A local SHIIP counselor is available at Cherokee Regional Medical Center at (712) 225-3368, Ext. 148. They will be able to answer your Medicare questions. More information about can also be found on the SHIIP website, www.therightcalliowa.gov. You may also call the statewide toll free number, 1-800-351-4664 or e-mail shiip@iid.iowa.gov.