



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONSUMER ALERT: FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE NOT REQUIRED FOR ENROLLMENT IN MEDICARE PART D

Income information being used to push seniors into pricier prescription drug plans

OKLAHOMA CITY – Medicare Oklahoma, a citizen support group providing education to seniors on Medicare’s new “Part D” prescription drug program, today issued a consumer alert for those currently comparing drug plans and preparing to enroll. Federal law does not require people to disclose financial information before enrolling in a Medicare drug plan.

According to Bill Shapard, Medicare Oklahoma director and co-founder, the group’s Help Line has been “flooded” with calls in recent weeks by seniors who say they have been asked for financial information when they call some prospective providers; they are uncomfortable giving out this information and want to know why it is necessary.

“We believe there are some providers using personal financial information to push seniors into enrolling in more expensive plans that they may not need,” said Shapard. “It’s unnecessary; and it’s sad that some companies are taking advantage of the confusion people are experiencing with the new federal program designed to help Medicare eligibles.”

Medicare Oklahoma spokesman Renzi Stone added that it is unfortunate that this problem is becoming so prevalent because it threatens to undermine the success of the government’s effort to provide better prescription drug coverage to every citizen.

“There is no doubt that with all of the plans and options available to people, there is plenty to consider, without having to deal with deceptive sales tactics,” said Stone. “We are telling people to take a deep breath and relax; there is plenty of time, and help is available.”

Stone added that Medicare Oklahoma is currently touring central Oklahoma offering free seminars. For a complete schedule of events, visit www.medicareoklahoma.com or call the Help Line at (405)607-0058.

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