



National Indian Health Board

News Alert!

December 14, 2004

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

Amy C. Sagalkin, Project Coordinator
National Indian Health Board
101 Constitution Ave. NW Suite 8-B02
Washington, D.C. 20001
(202) 742-4262
asagalkin@nihb.org

\$600 FROM MEDICARE WITH A TRANSITIONAL PRESCRIPTION DRUG DISCOUNT CARD – ACT NOW!

Washington, D.C.-- The National Indian Health Board urges Indian people who are eligible to be sure sign up by December 31, 2004 for the new Medicare approved drug discount drug card program. To help with the enrollment effort, the National Indian Health Board is launching a new website to assist Native Elders with their new Medicare options. This site is www.ainmedicare.org.

As part of the Medicare Modernization Act the Medicare program is offering a Drug Discount card for Elders. The Medicare Drug Card program includes transitional assistance for eligible low income elders for calendar years 2004 and 2005. The Medicare discount card can be used at many Indian Health Service, Tribal or Urban pharmacies. Call your local clinic or pharmacy to ask which cards they accept.

Elders with yearly incomes under \$12,569 (higher limit for Alaska and Hawaii residents) may also be eligible for a \$600 credit on their discount card. This income level does not include Tribal Trust Fund monies and Individual Indian Money accounts. Anyone with Medicare Part A or Part B, but NOT on Medicaid, can apply by using a simple application. The applications can be taken by phone, on the World Wide Web or by fax.

cont.

“The Medicare discount drug card program is good for our elders and good for our Indian health care system,” says H. Sally Smith, Chairperson of the National Indian Health Board. “For each \$600 credit our elders use at an Indian Health Service, Tribal or urban pharmacy, \$600 from Medicare goes into our communities to help cover other critical health care services.”

NIHB reminds IHS, Tribal and Urban pharmacies, tribal health departments, families with elders who need prescription medications to investigate the discount drug card program immediately. **The complete application to get the full \$600 credit for 2004 must be submitted before December 31, 2004.**

The time to act is now! Get more information at The National Indian Health Board’s new Medicare website. Go to WWW.AIANMEDICARE.ORG. Also, go online at WWW.MEDICARE.GOV or call 1-800-MEDICARE or speak to your benefits coordinator or local pharmacist to get application information about the Medicare discount drug card program and the \$600 credit for low income Native Elders.

###

This report is prepared by the National Indian Health Board for distribution to Tribal Governments via the Area Health Boards. It is intended to provide timely information on current federal and national policy issues. Comments are welcome.

The Honorable H. Sally Smith, Chairman, National Indian Health Board

If you are experiencing problems with this email, please visit: www.nihb.org