



## SHIIP NEWS RELEASE

### **Iowans with Medicare May Save \$3,900 on Prescription Drugs**

February 2010

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According to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, approximately 15,500 Iowans could be eligible for Extra Help, which significantly reduces the costs of Medicare Part D prescription drug plans. “Part D is starting its fifth year and we still have Iowans who qualify for the Extra Help and haven’t applied,” says Kris Gross from the Senior Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP). “We encourage all Iowans to talk with friends and family on Medicare to see if they are aware of and may qualify for Extra Help.” she adds.

Extra Help gives eligible seniors and adults with disabilities assistance to buy the prescription drugs they need to remain healthy. Some people with Medicare automatically qualify for Extra Help while others will need to be at or below certain income and resource levels. An individual whose annual income is under \$16,245 and who has less than \$12,510 in resources may qualify. A married couple that lives together may qualify if their income is below \$21,855 and they have less than \$25,010 in resources.

Resources include bank accounts, stocks and bonds, but do not include your home, cars or other exempt assets. Effective this year, cash values on life insurance policies and financial support from family and friends will no longer count as income and resources in determining eligibility. These changes make it possible for even more Iowans to qualify for Extra Help.

Even if your annual income is higher than these guidelines, you still may be able to receive Extra Help. That’s why it’s so important to fill out an application. There is no enrollment deadline and no late-enrollment penalty when applying for Extra Help. Once you qualify, you can choose a Part D plan. If you do not select a plan, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services will randomly select a plan for you.

People on Medicare who believe they may qualify, as well as those who have applied in the past and were turned down, should apply or re-apply. You can apply in person at your local Social Security Administration (SSA) office, online at [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov) or call SSA at 800-772-1213. Iowans can call the state of Iowa’s Senior Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP) at 1-800-351-4664 (TTY 800-735-2942) for more information and assistance. SHIIP counselors across the state are ready to help individuals complete the application for Part D Extra Help. SHIIP is a free, confidential and objective service of the state of Iowa. It does not sell, endorse or promote any insurance products.