

01/28/2016

Department of Health Launches Pilot Program to Provide Drug Coverage for Uninsured Pennsylvanians with Hepatitis C and HIV

Harrisburg, PA – Pennsylvania Secretary of Health Dr. Karen Murphy and Secretary of Aging Teresa Osborne announced today the Special Pharmaceutical Benefits Program (SPBP) is implementing a pilot program offering no cost coverage of hepatitis C antiviral medications for individuals with a dual diagnosis of HIV and hepatitis C. This pilot program will be a collaboration between the Department of Health (DOH) and the Department of Aging (PDA).

“Protecting Pennsylvania’s more vulnerable residents is one of the Wolf Administration’s primary objectives,” said Secretary Murphy. “Providing drug coverage for individuals suffering from hepatitis C or HIV who couldn’t otherwise afford the proper medical treatments is a part of our goal to ensure that every resident of the commonwealth has the ability to access needed medication.”

The \$13 million, six-month program will be made available to hundreds of low-income Pennsylvanians with both hepatitis C and HIV and is funded through additional pharmaceutical liability recoveries made by the Department of Aging’s Pharmaceutical Assistance Contract for the Elderly program (PACE), which offers low-cost prescription medication to qualified residents, age 65 and older.

“The opportunity to partner with the Department of Health on this pilot program is an exciting opportunity to leverage 30-plus years of experience administering an effective prescription drug program with the Wolf Administration’s steadfast commitment to support the health of and improve the quality of life for all Pennsylvanians,” said Secretary of Aging Teresa Osborne.

The SPBP is Pennsylvania’s AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP), which is funded by a federal grant through the Health Resources and Services Administration Ryan White HIV/AIDS Part B Program.

The SPBP plays a vital role in providing access to medications for people living with HIV, including those with hepatitis C co-infection. The program serves low to moderate income individuals who are underinsured or uninsured and have a diagnosis of HIV.

In addition to HIV viral load suppression, maintaining optimal overall health is equally vital to the management of HIV disease and increases the quality of life for commonwealth citizens.

Individuals eligible for or enrolled in other prescription plans must utilize those benefits prior to SPBP.

For a full list of the medications, the approval criteria, request form and additional details, please go to the SPBP website at: www.health.pa.gov/spbp.

For more information about the PACE program, call 1-800-225-7223.

MEDIA CONTACT: Amy Worden, DOH, 717-787-1783

Kirstin Snow, PDA, 717-783-1550

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