



## Labor/Management Healthcare Coalition of the Upper Midwest

November 9, 2009

Doug Rubbelke  
Executive Director  
1970 Oakcrest Ave.  
Suite 119  
Roseville, MN. 55113

Re: **Accessing Low Cost Prescriptions without Prescription Benefits**

Dear Labor/Management Healthcare Coalition Funds,

It is a trying time in our economy and your members may find themselves in a situation where they do not have a prescription drug benefit. We all hope this scenario is only temporary; however with the importance of medications we want these members to remain compliant to their therapies. Unfortunately members find out very quickly how expensive these medications are once the total cost hidden behind a copayment is exposed. This can present an unfavorable and unhealthy outcome if a medication is voluntarily discontinued due to its cost.

We want to make our member funds aware of the options available to individuals who find themselves in this uncomfortable situation. Please share this with those in your fund that may be impacted.

1. **\$4.00/\$10.00 Prescription Programs** – Many “big box” retailers now offer an extensive list of high quality, generic products at low cash prices. These generics treat many conditions including blood pressure, cholesterol, anxiety and muscle pain. Most of these medications were high cost brands only 3-5 years ago; they are clinically proven and safe medications that should be considered. Members should talk to their doctor or pharmacist if they are taking an expensive brand name product, there may be an equally effective generic for much less money. These programs are the best choice for individuals without a prescription benefit.
2. **Pharmaceutical Industry Programs** - Many of the large pharmaceutical manufacturers offer “patient assistance programs”, named PAPs, to patients that are unable to afford their brand name medications. Several manufacturers have extended their PAPs to include patients who have lost benefits due to unemployment. Your members should speak to their pharmacist to determine what company manufactures their brand name medication. Members can then go to the manufacturers website to locate toll-free numbers and/or email inquiries on the PAP.
3. **Please note that the Coalition is NOT endorsing the below programs; rather they are examples of many available on the Internet.**

Pharma Consortium: [www.togetherrxaccess.com](http://www.togetherrxaccess.com)  
Pfizer: [www.pfizerhelpfulanswers.com](http://www.pfizerhelpfulanswers.com)  
GSK: [www.commitmenttoaccess.com](http://www.commitmenttoaccess.com)

### Minnesota Office:

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Office: 651-379-2405  
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[www.labormanagementcoalition.org](http://www.labormanagementcoalition.org)

### Wisconsin Office:

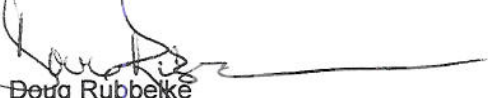
1759 North Hi Mount Blvd.  
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4. Cash Discount Cards – There are discount prescription drug cards available at no charge to individuals. These programs, which can be used in most retail pharmacies, claim to save substantial money prescriptions. In reality, most do not bring value to the patient; rather they open an avenue for middlemen to make money. Variable pricing on individual medications across different pharmacies and based on the date a prescription is filled makes these programs nearly impossible to predict actual savings. Users of these cards must be prudent and shop around for the best price as it may vary from pharmacy to pharmacy. Just like purchasing a new television, prices fluctuate and members must look for the best deal. A couple of examples are listed below. **Please note that the Coalition is NOT endorsing the below programs; rather they are examples of many available on the Internet.**

CVS/Caremark:	<a href="http://www.rxsavingsplus.com">www.rxsavingsplus.com</a>
Rx Well Card:	<a href="http://www.rxwellcard.com">www.rxwellcard.com</a>
Your Rx Card:	<a href="http://www.yourrxcard.com">www.yourrxcard.com</a>

I hope you find this information of value and it will provide assistance to your members in need of medication.

Sincerely,



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