

Ask the Welfare Fund  
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Question: I am an active CSA member. When I went to the local drug store on January 2<sup>nd</sup> to refill my prescription for Lipitor, it cost me \$ 57.00. Last month it only cost me \$ 15.50. Did the change in co-payments make that big a difference?

Answer: No, not entirely. Your prescription drug benefit has an annual deductible of \$ 50 per person and \$ 150 per family. You met your 2006 deductible earlier in the year, and in December were only paying the 20%. In January, the first \$ 50 of drug cost is your deductible, and then you pay your co-payment on the remaining amount. In this case, your prescription cost \$ 78.00. Since Lipitor is a preferred brand-name medication, after the \$ 50 deductible you paid 25% of the remaining amount. Next month, it will cost about \$ 19.50. You will need to get a prescription for a 60-day supply, and submit it to the mail-order pharmacy by March. At that point, it will only cost \$ 25.00, and you will get a 60-day supply of medication

Question: I am a retired principal in the GHI Medicare drug plan. I had \$ 2500 of out-of-pocket prescription drug costs in 2006. Do I have to absorb another \$ 1100 in 2007 before I pay only 5%?

Answer: No. The out-of-pocket amounts that each participant in a Medicare Part-D drug plan must absorb is an annual amount. Each year, you start over at zero. The good news is that you will only pay 25% of the cost of your medications again, until the drug cost reaches \$ 2,250. The bad news is that this year you must pay \$ 3,850 in out-of-pocket drug costs before you are in the catastrophic situation and pay only 5%. This increase in out-of-pocket costs was designed and written in the original legislation that created Medicare Part-D.

Question: I am a retiree who just became Medicare eligible in September. Will I get my \$ 40 per month for the drug rider for the entire year?

Answer: No. you will get a check in early February for the four months of 2006 that you were Medicare eligible. The CSA Retiree Welfare Fund will reimburse 80% of your prescription drug co-payments, after the \$ 100 deductible, for all prescriptions you obtained from January through August.