

HB 1641 -- Senior Prescription Drug Benefits

Sponsor: Page

This bill coordinates the benefits for the federal Medicare Prescription Drug Improvement and Modernization Act of 2003. In its main provisions, the bill:

(1) Establishes the Missouri Senior Prescription Drug Plan within the Department of Health and Senior Services and makes the plan the payer of last resort;

(2) Repeals the Missouri Senior Rx Program 30 days after notice has been given to the Revisor of Statutes by the department that the state plan has been fully implemented;

(3) Requires the plan to pay 75% of the 2006 federal standard drug benefit coverage gap of \$2,850. Eligible individuals must have an income within 150% to 200% of the federal poverty level or an income below 150% of the federal poverty level and fail to meet the federal asset test. This provision is effective January 1, 2006, and is subject to appropriations;

(4) Establishes a nine-member Missouri Senior Prescription Plan Commission within the department. The commission is responsible for governing the implementation of the plan. The bill specifies the composition and terms of the commission members;

(5) Requires applications for the plan to be conducted jointly with applications for the federal Medicare Part-D benefit. The commission is required to verify eligibility of the applicants on an annual basis. This provision is effective November 15, 2005;

(6) Requires the plan to provide coverage for prescription drugs that are covered in the provider's formulary established for the federal Medicare prescription drug benefit;

(7) Prohibits the plan from providing coverage for certain drugs and classes of drugs. Prescription drugs which are not reasonable and necessary are excluded from coverage under the plan;

(8) Prohibits the state from being charged any amount in excess of the amount charged by providers of the federal program;

(9) Requires the commission to apply to the United States Department of Health and Human Services for applicable waivers. The commission must also apply for public and private grants; and

(10) Establishes the Missouri Senior Prescription Drug Plan

Clearinghouse within the commission. The commission can require proposals for the third party administration of the clearinghouse. The bill also specifies the purposes of the clearinghouse.