



News from Health Care Financing & Economics (HCFE)

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NEW PUBLICATION BY HCFE RESEARCHERS

On May 23, 2006, Health Affairs~Web Exclusive published "Market Watch: A First Look At The New Medicare Prescription Drug Plans" <http://content.healthaffairs.org/cgi/content/abstract/hlthaff.25.w252> co-authored by HCFE researchers Austin Frakt and Steven Pizer. This research was supported by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundations' (RWJF's) Changes in Health Care Financing and Organization (HCFO) Initiative. Below is the abstract for the article:

"Medicare began offering an outpatient prescription drug benefit through private plans in January 2006. Using nationwide data, we examine the availability, costs, and benefits of regional and local plans offering these benefits to beneficiaries. Because they are an entirely new concept for Medicare, we focus on stand-alone prescription drug plans, comparing them with other Medicare health plans offering drug coverage. The infamous "doughnut hole" exists for all but a few of these plans. One national stand-alone drug plan, though, covers brand-name drugs with no gap. Variations in cost sharing and formularies provide beneficiaries with choices as well as complexity."

Please address questions about the article to Austin Frakt at frakt@bu.edu.

UPCOMING PRESENTATIONS

June 7, 2006. American Society of Health Economists, Madison, Wisconsin.

- Dr. Steven Pizer will present "Storm Clouds on the Horizon - Expected Adverse Selection in Medicare Prescription Drug Plans" during a session on Medicare Drug Benefits

June 25-27, 2006. AcademyHealth's Annual Research Meeting, Seattle, Washington.

- "Storm Clouds on the Horizon - Expected Adverse Selection in Medicare Prescription Drug Plans," Dr. Steven Pizer. Monday, June 26, 2006.
- "The New Medicare Prescription Drug Plans: Availability, Costs and Benefits," Dr. Austin Frakt. Monday, June 26, 2006.
- "Delayed Access to Health Care and Mortality," Dr. Julia Prentice. Sunday, June 25, 2006.



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