



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
November 12, 2008

Contact: Heidi Hall  
202-478-3560

**MEDICARE TODAY LAUNCHES NATIONAL  
MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUG ENROLLMENT AWARENESS CAMPAIGN**  
*New Survey Shows Vast Majority of Seniors Satisfied with Medicare Drug Benefit*

WASHINGTON, DC – Health care leaders today announced a national campaign to raise awareness about the 2009 Medicare prescription drug coverage open enrollment period, which runs from November 15 to December 31, 2008.

The campaign is designed to encourage seniors to sign up for prescription drug plans under Medicare's Part D program if they have not already done so, and to remind those seniors who are already enrolled in the program to review their current plan and compare it with other available plans.

"It is extremely important for beneficiaries, especially those with limited income, to take advantage of the choice, convenience and cost savings that Medicare's prescription drug plans offer them," said Mary R. Grealy, president of the Healthcare Leadership Council, a coalition of the nation's leading health care companies and organizations. "This national campaign will help make sure seniors are aware that now is the time to enroll in a plan or review their current Medicare drug plan."

The campaign will include television advertising, media coverage and grassroots outreach activities and will highlight the high satisfaction rates among beneficiaries currently enrolled in Part D plans.

Heading into its fourth year, seniors continue to give the program high marks, with 90 percent reporting that they were satisfied with their plan, up 12 points since the beginning of the program, according to a survey released today by Medicare Today, a project of the Healthcare Leadership Council and conducted in September by KRC Research.

"This survey is yet more evidence that the Medicare prescription drug benefit provides seniors with the flexibility they need to choose a plan that's right for them," said former U.S. Senator and Medicare Today Co-Chairman John Breaux.

According to the survey, in addition to high satisfaction rates, beneficiaries report that they're saving money under Medicare Part D prescription drug plans, which have been available to beneficiaries since 2006. Prior to the addition of Part D coverage, millions of Medicare beneficiaries had coverage for hospital and doctor expenses, but not prescription drug expenses. Most seniors agree that their plan is delivering what it said it would when they signed up, and nearly eight in 10 seniors say they are better off now than before the program. Eighty-six percent say their co-payments are affordable, 85 percent say their monthly premiums are affordable, 91 percent say their plan offers a good value, and 71 percent say they've lowered their prescription drug spending.

"During these tough economic times, I'm pleased that the program can provide savings for seniors and that they have the ability to choose the plan that best suits their needs," said former U.S. Senator and Medicare Today Co-Chairman Trent Lott.

Current and potential beneficiaries can speak with a Medicare counselor for information about the benefit by calling 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). To prepare for a discussion with a counselor, beneficiaries should have on hand a list of the prescription drugs they take, including the dosage and frequency, and a preferred pharmacy.

The Medicare Prescription Drug Plan Finder and Medicare Options Compare are two new tools available on [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov) to assist current beneficiaries and those eligible in process of choosing a plan or comparing a current plan to another option. These tools provide detailed information on all the available plans and the means to compare them based on cost, coverage, service area, and quality.

The Social Security Administration can also provide assistance for those who may qualify financially for extra help with the cost of prescription drugs. Medicare beneficiaries interested in applying for extra help or those who have previously applied and want to check their status can call 1-800- 772-1213 to contact their local Social Security office.

#### *About the Survey*

*This nationally representative telephone survey of seniors 65 and older enrolled in Medicare was conducted September 16-22, 2008, and has a margin of error of plus or minus 3.1 percentage points. To view the survey results in their entirety, go to [www.medicaretoday.org](http://www.medicaretoday.org).*

#### *About Medicare Today*

*Healthcare Leadership Council launched Medicare Today in November 2004 to reach out to Medicare beneficiaries who needed reliable information on how to get the greatest value from the new Medicare benefits. Medicare Today administers the partnership of over 400 national and local organizations including AARP, National Association of Family Physicians, and National Alliance for Hispanic Health. Medicare Today develops innovative tools for use by all partners, commissions research studies, and undertakes earned media efforts and outreach to inform beneficiaries about the value of the new benefits under the Medicare Modernization Act (MMA).*

###