

Questions and Answers About the 2008 Empire Plan Prescription Drug Program

Q: What will *change* with the 2008 New York State Government Empire Plan Prescription Drug Program?

A: Beginning January 1, 2008, UnitedHealthcare will insure and administer The Empire Plan Prescription Drug Program. United Healthcare will partner with Medco Health Solutions for retail pharmacy network and mail pharmacy services. Only the Program insurer/administrator is changing; The Empire Plan prescription drug benefits remain the same.

Q: What will *stay the same* with the 2008 New York State Government Empire Plan Prescription Drug Program?

A: There will be no change in the plan or benefits in 2008. The following will be the same in 2008:

- A toll-free NYSHIP number 1-877-7-NYSHIP (1-877-769-7447) that is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week for Empire Plan Prescription Drug Program questions
- You pay copayments for all covered prescriptions

Up to a 30 day supply from a participating retail pharmacy or through the Medco Mail Service:	31 to 90 day supply from a participating retail pharmacy:	31 to 90 day supply through the Medco Mail Service:
Generic Drug \$5	Generic Drug \$10	Generic Drug\$5
Preferred Brand-Name Drug \$15	Preferred Brand-Name Drug \$30	Preferred Brand-Name Drug\$20
Non-Preferred Brand-Name Drug..... \$30	Non-Preferred Brand-Name Drug..... \$60	Non-Preferred Brand-Name Drug\$55

- Empire Plan Benefit Card
- Mandatory generic substitution requirements
- Prior authorization for certain prescriptions
- Drug Utilization Review
- Up to a 90-day supply at retail or mail service, with refills up to one year
- Preaddressed, postage-paid envelopes for mail service

Q: Why did the prescription drug vendor change?

A. The contract with the vender was due to expire at the end of 2007 and New York State law required that the contract be rebid. UnitedHealthcare/Medco was selected as a result of this process.

Q: What will Agency Health Benefit Administrators receive before January 1, 2008?

A:

- A supply of the 2008 Preferred Drug List
- A supply of new Medco Mail Service forms/envelopes, preaddressed and pre-paid
- A *Prescription Drug Special Report* outlining the transition from Empire BlueCross BlueShield/Caremark to United Healthcare/Medco (as part of the 2008 At A Glance mailing in December)

Q: How will enrollees be informed about the change?

A: Some enrollees will be notified via a November mailing outlining the change from Empire BlueCross BlueShield/Caremark to United Healthcare/Medco. Not all enrollees in The Empire Plan will get this letter – only those enrollees who may be taking a medication that is moving from preferred to non-preferred status, effective January 1, 2008.

Enrollees will receive:

- 2008 At A Glance with a *Special Drug Report* (information about the Empire BlueCross BlueShield/Caremark transition to United Healthcare/Medco) and the 2008 Preferred Drug List
- Existing mail service users will receive a letter in December with a form to transfer refills from Caremark to Medco Mail Service and a questionnaire entitled *Health, Allergy and Medication Questionnaire*.

Q: Will all retail pharmacies be in the 2008 Empire Plan Participating Pharmacy network?

A: Most major chain and independent pharmacies will be in the network. If an enrollee finds that their pharmacy is not in the network, they are *encouraged to ask the pharmacies to consider joining the network*. To determine whether a pharmacy is in The Empire Plan network visit the pharmacy locator online in the Benefit Programs section of the New York State Department of Civil Service web sit at www.cs.state.ny.us.

Q: Will there be a new benefit card needed to fill prescription drugs on or after January 1, 2008?

A: No, there will not be a new benefit card to fill prescriptions on or after January 1, 2008. Continue to use your Empire Plan Benefit Card. This is the same card you use for your Empire Plan benefits.

Q: Is it necessary to present The Empire Plan Benefit Card each time a prescription is filled at a retail pharmacy?

A: Yes. Always present your card to the pharmacist when you take your prescription to an Empire Plan/Medco participating retail pharmacy to receive the full benefit of The Empire Plan Prescription Drug Program. If you do not present your Empire Plan Benefit Card, you could be required to pay 100 percent of the cost of the drug. However, in some

instances, your pharmacy will keep your prescription benefit information in its records after your first visit and will not require your Empire Plan Benefit Card for later visits.

Q: Since there was a different Empire Plan Prescription Drug Program carrier for 2007, how will a covered enrollee get their current prescription refilled in 2008?

A: Any mail pharmacy prescription refills (*) will be transferred from Caremark to Medco as of January 1, 2008. To place a refill order, call The Empire Plan toll free at 1-877-7-NYSHIP (1-877-769-7447) 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Choose The Empire Plan Prescription Drug Program. Enrollees with available refills at the mail service will get a letter and forms to transfer in December. Or if preferred, the previous vendor's (Caremark) refill label along with completed Empire Plan Mail Service Order Form may be sent to Medco Mail Service.

*It will be necessary to send in a new prescription from the doctor if the previous prescription was a controlled substance or compound medicine, no longer has refills available or is over one year old. If you have refills at a retail pharmacy that will continue to be in The Empire Plan network, your refill prescriptions will not be affected by the change to the different Empire Plan prescription drug carrier.

Q: What are the options for filling a prescription after January 1, 2008 if my current retail pharmacy does not participate?

A: There are three choices:

1. Ask the pharmacy if they will transfer the prescription to an Empire Plan participating pharmacy (except for compound drugs and controlled substances that cannot be transferred);
2. Pay cash and submit a claim for reimbursement; or
3. Ask the prescribing doctor for a new prescription to fill at an Empire Plan participating retail pharmacy or the Medco Mail Service

Q: Can prescriptions be sent to the Medco Mail Service now?

A: Since the Medco Mail Service will not become the new mail service pharmacy for The Empire Plan until January 1, 2008, prescriptions should not be sent to Medco until December 28, 2007.

Q: Beginning January 1, 2008, how do I get started with the Medco Mail Service pharmacy?

A: It's easy for an enrollee to use the Medco Mail Service pharmacy. Just follow these steps:

1. Get a prescription from your doctor for up to a 90-day supply of your medication when medically appropriate.
2. Complete and submit The Empire Plan Mail Service Order Form. Employees can print order forms from the Department of Civil Service web site at www.cs.state.ny.us. Select *Benefit Programs*, then *NYSHIP Online*. Follow the instructions to choose your group if prompted. On the resulting NYSHIP Online health benefits page, select *Using Your Benefits*, then *Forms*. (The form is also available to Agency Health Benefits

Administrators on HBA Online at www.cs.state.ny.us/ebdonline. Open the *Publications & Forms* section, then the *NYSHIP Insurance Forms and Support Materials* and then *NYSHIP Claims and Order Forms*.) The mailing address is located on The Empire Plan Mail Service Order Form.

3. To order The Empire Plan Mail Service Order Form and preaddressed postage-paid envelope, call The Empire Plan toll free at 1-877-7-NYSHIP (1-877-769-7447) 24 hours a day, seven days a week and choose The Empire Plan Prescription Drug Program.

4. Complete The Empire Plan Mail Service Order Form.

5. Insert the prescription, your copayment and the completed Empire Plan Mail Service Order Form in the pre-addressed postage-paid envelope and mail it (if you print The Empire Plan Mail Service Order Form from the web site, mail it to the address on the form). If you are unsure of your co-payment, call The Empire Plan toll free at 1-877-7-NYSHIP (1-877-769-7447) 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Choose The Empire Plan Prescription Drug Program from the options. You may choose to pay with a credit card by writing your credit card number and expiration date on the order form. Medco will charge your account for the applicable copayment amount. If paying by check, make the check payable to Medco. Please write your Empire Plan identification number on your check.

Q: Is the Preferred Drug List changing?

A: Yes, the Preferred Drug List changes annually. It would have changed even if the vendor did not. Enrollees will receive a 2008 Empire Plan Preferred Drug List and *Special Prescription Drug Report* along with their *At A Glance* in December.

Q: Are all my drugs still covered?

A: All drugs that were previously covered under The Empire Plan are still covered. Visit the New York State Department of Civil Service web site at www.cs.state.ny.us, select *Benefit Programs*, and then *NYSHIP Online*. Follow the instructions to choose your group if prompted. On the resulting NYSHIP Online health benefits page, select *Find a Provider* and scroll down to the link for the *2008 Preferred Drug List*. **This is not a complete list of all prescription drugs on the Preferred Drug List or covered under The Empire Plan.** This list includes the most commonly prescribed generic and brand name-drugs that will have lower copayments. Using prescription drugs that appear on this list saves money. Using generics saves even more. This list is subject to change.

You may also call The Empire Plan toll free at 1-877-7-NYSHIP (1-877-769-7447) 24 hours a day, seven days a week to inquire about a specific drug. Choose The Empire Plan Prescription Drug Program option.

Q: What is the deadline for submitting direct-reimbursement claims to Caremark for prescriptions filled in 2007?

A: **Claims for prescriptions filled BEFORE December 31, 2007** should be filed as soon as possible. However, there are 90 days after the end of the calendar year – by March 31, 2008 – to submit claims for non-participating pharmacies to Caremark for prescriptions filled in 2007. These should be sent to Caremark at:

The Empire Plan Prescription Drug Program
P.O. Box 52071
Phoenix, AZ 85072-2071

All direct-reimbursement **claims for non-participating pharmacy prescriptions filled ON and AFTER January 1, 2008** must be submitted to The Empire Plan Prescription Drug Program at:

The Empire Plan Prescription Drug Program
P.O. Box 14711
Lexington, Kentucky 40512

Q: Do certain drugs still require prior authorization?

A: Yes. Existing requests for Prior Authorization drugs will be transferred from Caremark to Medco. All enrollees must continue to obtain Prior Authorization for certain drugs under the Empire Plan Prescription Drug Program. For the most current list of drugs requiring prior authorization, enrollees may call The Empire Plan toll free at 1-877-7-NYSHIP (1-877-769-7447) 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Choose The Empire Plan Prescription Drug Program option. Or, check the New York State Department of Civil Service web site at www.cs.state.ny.us. Select *Benefit Programs* and follow the prompts to *NYSHIP Online*, then click on *Find a Provider* and scroll. For information about prior authorization requirements, call The Empire Plan Prescription Drug Program at the number above.

Agency Health Benefits Administrators also have easy access to the Prior Authorization Drug List on HBA Online at www.cs.state.ny.us/ebdonline. On the home page, select *Easy Reference* or *Empire Plan Providers, Pharmacies & Services*.