

Pharmacy School Students to Offer Seniors Free Advice on Medicare Part D

Two Saturday sessions to offer seniors assistance in selecting best drug plan

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Students and staff from the University of California, San Diego (UCSD) Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences and UCSD Medical Center Pharmacy are offering two workshops for seniors who want assistance in selecting their Medicare Part D drug plan. The workshops will be held on Saturday, April 8, from 12 noon to 4 p.m. in the SDG&E room at Thornton Hospital in La Jolla; and on Saturday, April 15, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. in dining rooms 1 and 2 at UCSD Medical Center.

"Medicare Part D is confusing for some seniors, who might not have access to the Internet to research the prescription drug coverage plan that is best for their needs and financial situation," said Ray Smith, Pharm.D., director of UCSD's outpatient pharmacies. Smith will be joined by staff pharmacists, billers and pharmacy residents and students from the Skaggs School of Pharmacy to educate and assist seniors in San Diego, their family members or representatives.

"There are 18 different drug plans in California, each with multiple levels of coverage," said Smith. "This program is unique in offering assistance from pharmacists who can answer questions about medications and who have had experience with the Part D plan since it began in January."

"This is also a great opportunity for students to reach out to seniors and make the community aware of various services offered by the pharmacy. As the first students to graduate from the Skaggs School of Pharmacy, community service is especially important to us, and has been part of our education as soon-to-be-pharmacists," said Sanam Ansari, a student pharmacist at UCSD who will graduate this June with the School's charter class.

Seniors are asked to bring a list of all medications they are currently taking. Participation is free, but space may be limited, so seniors are asked to phone 858-657-8612 to schedule a 30-minute appointment.

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