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Center for Independence of the Disabled, NY

CIDNY Quick Take

Get more money with your food stamps to buy fresh food

The harvest is at its peak now and you can get \$2 in "Health Bucks", coupons to buy fruits and vegetables, for every \$5 in food stamps you spend at 65 participating Farmers Markets around the City. Check out the [map enclosed with this mailing](#) for the markets and, their days, and hours. This deal will continue through November 15. Happy eating!



HRA Stops Paying Medicare Part B Premium for Thousands of Eligible New Yorkers

Many people have received letters from the Social Security Administration telling them that New York is no longer paying their Medicare Part B premium through the Medicare Savings Programs and that a premium of \$115.40 will be deducted from their monthly check. Some people are receiving letters announcing that two or three months of premiums will be initially deducted, reducing their income for that month to nearly half of their normal amount.

As we understand it, this is happening because some people years ago did not respond to a recertification that may have been sent by HRA, but the premium benefit continued to be paid until a state audit uncovered the problem.

Most people receiving these letters are still eligible for a Medicare Savings Program that

pays their Medicare premium. They should reapply for the program with HRA and they should request a fair hearing with "aid to continue" on the grounds that HRA failed to send them a notice discontinuing their participation in the Medicare Savings Program. If you are a person needing help replying or requesting a fair hearing about this issue call CIDNY at 212-674-2300.

Changes to Medicaid Prescription Drug Coverage Coming in October

As we reported last month, in October 2 million people in a Medicaid Managed Care Plan will start getting their prescription drugs through the Plan rather than with their Medicaid card. Each Plan will have its own list of medications that they cover, rules about "prior approval"

and quantity limits, and network of participating pharmacies. Plans will provide a one time fill of prescriptions they don't cover until January 1. For certain kinds of drugs, most Plans have agreed to allow a consumer to continue the medication they are currently taking regardless of whether it is on the plan list or has a special rule. These kinds of drugs are antipsychotics, immunosuppressant's, antiretrovirals, anti convulsants, and anti depressants. People will be able to appeal with the plan and/or request a fair hearing with continued access to the drug while waiting for the fair hearing. Watch your mail for letters from Medicaid and from your Managed Care Plan. If you have questions or need further information contact



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Community Health Advocate Greg Otten at gotten@cidny.org or 646.442.4145 for advice and help.

What you need to know about Primary and Special Elections

Primary and Special Elections will be held on Tuesday, September 13, 2011. Not all districts will have elections. To find out if you have a Primary or Special Election in your district, call the NYC Board of Elections at 866-868-3692 (TTY 212-487-5496). To see the list of candidates for the Primary and Special Elections, go to:

<http://www.vote.nyc.ny.us/candidateslist.html>

The last day to register for this Primary Election was on August 19, 2011. However, you have until September 3, 2011 to register for this Special Election.

Looking ahead to the General Election

The General Election takes place on Tuesday, November 8, 2011. The last day to register for this election is October 14, 2011.

If you have time during the General Election, join CIDNY in surveying poll sites to make sure they are accessible. To find out more about this fun activity, or if you would like help registering to vote, contact Rima McCoy, Voting Rights Coordinator at rmccoy@cidny.org or call 646-442-4146 (TTY 212-674-5619).

Remember, for the Primary, Special and General Elections, you have the option to vote on a Ballot Marking Device. You can learn more about the Ballot Marking Device [at this link](#).

Needs Assessment of Social Security Administration Beneficiaries with Disabilities

University of California, San Francisco (UCSF)



Are you a person with a disability (including cognitive, hearing, vision, or physical) who receives benefits from the Social Security Administration? Benefits can mean SSI, SSDI, or retirement.

If so, we'd like to talk with you!!

We want to know more about your experience applying for Social Security benefits and your interactions with the Social Security Administration. We are conducting a needs assessment for the Social Security Administration so that they can communicate better with their beneficiaries who have disabilities. Phone interviews will be approximately a 30-45 minutes long.

For more information, or to participate, please call this toll-free number: 1-855-209-9538. Please speak clearly and slowly to leave your name and number. A UCSF researcher will get back in touch with you to tell you more about this study. Or you can email: alice.wong2@ucsf.edu

Alice Wong, Staff Research Associate II, UCSF Disability Statistics Center.