



State of Wisconsin
Department of Health Services

Jim Doyle, Governor
Karen E. Timberlake, Secretary

For Immediate Release

February 10, 2009

CONTACT: Stephanie Smiley, (608) 267-6773

Governor Doyle Asks Obama Administration to Extend SeniorCare Through 2012

Submits Formal Application for Extension

Governor Doyle has submitted the formal application to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to extend the state's successful prescription drug program, SeniorCare, to 2012. SeniorCare is currently scheduled to end December 31, 2009.

"Governor Doyle is committed to working with President Obama's administration to make sure that SeniorCare remains a viable alternative for more than 86,000 Wisconsin seniors," said Secretary Karen Timberlake. "SeniorCare not only gives our seniors the drugs they need at a price they can afford, but it also saves Wisconsin taxpayers and the federal government millions of dollars. During this tough economic time, our state needs to ensure that seniors have access to a program that is proven to be cost-effective for both seniors and taxpayers alike."

SeniorCare continues to be a popular and successful program and is an affordable alternative to Medicare Part D. Unlike Part D, SeniorCare has a simple enrollment process, a \$30 annual enrollment fee, an income-based deductible and copayments of \$5 for generic drugs or \$15 for brand drugs. SeniorCare also does not have a strict enrollment period or enrollment penalty, nor do members have a gap in coverage, like Medicare Part D.

The annual federal cost per enrollee for SeniorCare is \$588 and is significantly lower than the average Part D beneficiary cost of \$1,690. This difference alone accounts for an annual savings to taxpayers and the federal government of more than \$90 million dollars. The state of Wisconsin is also able to leverage additional savings because it can use its bargaining power to negotiate the lowest prices for prescription drugs, while Congress made it illegal for the federal government to bargain for lower prices.

SeniorCare has provided affordable, comprehensive prescription drug coverage to thousands of Wisconsin seniors since 2002.

For SeniorCare information, call the SeniorCare hotline at (800) 657-2038 or go to <http://dhs.wisconsin.gov/seniorcare/>

- END -