

2009 Blue Cross Billing Error UPDATE

FYI- As you know, last year Prescription Advantage enrollees in a BCBS Part D product were not billed for a differential in the benchmark amount. Some enrollees were billed and should not have been and some were never billed. BCBS is required to attempt to collect the amount owed to them. Below please find an update from Cindy Phillips, SHINE, on how these enrollees will be impacted.

Special thanks to Diane Paulson for following up on this matter and getting clarity about the process going forward. — Jessica Costantino, AARP Advocacy Director

From: Phillips, Cynthia (ELD)

Subject: BCBS bills for PA members

The Medicare Beneficiary Work group met today and CMS staff Arlene DiSalvo reported that after months of work between CMS and BCBS, there is a resolution to this problem.

About 5800 Massachusetts members had help from PA last year to pay their Blue Medicare RX PDP premiums up to the benchmark amount. BCBS, due to a systems glitch did not bill the members for the remaining amount above the benchmark that they owed. By law, BCBS is required to attempt to collect that remaining amount owed them. A letter and bill recently went out explaining the problem apprising the members of the amount owed (which includes the 2010 premiums). A payment plan is proposed.

Members are advised to call Blue Cross with questions. Arlene says: if they call Blue Cross the bill will be "adjusted", if they pay Blue Cross, the amount will be credited to future premiums. If they ignore the letter, there will be no ramifications.

Basically no one is harmed by this action. Bottom line, please advise people to call Blue Cross. Thanks and have a nice weekend! — Cindy Phillips, SHINE