

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services
Department of Health and Human Services
Attention: CMS-4159-P
P.O. Box 8013
Baltimore, MD 21244-8013

Re: CMS-4159-P Medicare Program; Contract Year 2015 Policy and Technical Changes to the Medicare Advantage and the Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit Programs; Proposed Rule

To Whom It May Concern:

As a Medicare Part D beneficiary and patron of an independent community pharmacy, I support efforts by Medicare to promote competition in preferred network plans.

I don't believe I should be limited to one large chain pharmacy or mail order service in order to obtain the lowest cost sharing offered by the plan, particularly if there are more pharmacies willing to offer the same pricing, but are not currently afforded the opportunity to do so by the prescription plans.

Allowing more pharmacies to participate as preferred providers creates real competition in the program. Competition among providers will improve the program for beneficiaries. Those of us in a plan which offers preferred pricing will be able to focus on selecting a pharmacy that best suits our individual health needs rather than feeling coerced to use the pharmacy that is offering the lowest co-pay.

Many independent community pharmacies offer services such as same day home delivery of medications to patients, counseling on proper use of medications and possible harmful interactions, and the pharmacists are easily accessible when questions arise. More Medicare beneficiaries can benefit from these services if preferred networks were opened to any pharmacy willing to accept the contractual terms.

I urge you to maintain the provisions that open restrictive networks to all pharmacies and force them to compete on service to improve the health and well-being to Medicare beneficiaries and to reduce costs to taxpayers.

Sincerely,