

TO: Physicians and Healthcare Providers

**FROM: Michelle Webb, Vice of President of Clinical Services
Dr. Janet Bull, Chief Medical Officer**

RE: Changes to Medicare Part D Drug Coverage

As a Medicare-certified hospice provider, we would like to inform you about changes to the Medicare Part D drug coverage from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and its impact on patients receiving hospice care.

As of May 1, 2014, Part D providers will be required to reject all medications until they receive authorization from the hospice that the medications are unrelated to the terminal diagnosis and related conditions.

What this means for your patients receiving hospice care

- Patients will likely be able to receive medications as usual, once we submit the prior authorization form to their Part D provider for those medications unrelated to their hospice condition or illness.
- In the event that a patient is on a non-formulary medication, an attempt will be made to switch to one on our formulary with the assistance of the pharmacist. Patients may choose however to pay for medications not on formulary.
- When a medication is determined to be related to the terminal illness, but not medically necessary the hospice physician, this medication will no longer be covered under the Hospice Benefit or Part D plan.. Our hospice physicians and nurse practitioners will review medication risks and benefits with patients before recommending changes.
- Patients can choose to continue medications that are not covered under the Hospice Benefit or Part D plan; however, patients will be financially responsible for paying “out-of-pocket” for these medications.

For your reference, the following link refers to the CMS website detailing the changes to the Part D Drug Coverage - <http://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Medicare-Fee-for-Service-Payment/Hospice/Downloads/Part-D-Payment-Hospice-Final-2014-Guidance.pdf>

Four Seasons is committed in partnering with you to provide the best care and treatment for your patients on hospice care. If you have questions or concerns, please call us at **(828) 692-6178**.