



IS PART D A GOOD DEAL? TOO SOON TO TELL

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“HHS Secretary Leavitt’s claim, in his One Month Progress Report, that Medicare Part D is ‘a good deal for seniors’ is premature at best”, said Judith Stein, Executive Director of the Center for Medicare Advocacy. There are two big reasons why Part D may *not* be a good deal. First, with just 60 days notice, Part D plans can change the drugs they cover and the rules they impose to control prescription drug costs. So the plan a Medicare beneficiary signs up for today can change every two months. Second, a Medicare beneficiary's drug needs can change unexpectedly during the year. A new illness or accident can require prescription medications that were unpredictable at the time the beneficiary enrolled in a Part D plan. But with few exceptions, beneficiaries cannot change plans until the next year and will be stuck with the plan, even if it does not cover the drugs they now need.

“Only at the end of a calendar year will beneficiaries be able to conclude whether or not their Part D plan was a good deal. Any claims to the contrary are inaccurate,” said Ms. Stein. “It's simply too soon to tell.”