

Part D: Getting to Know Medication Therapy Management (MTM)

Many of your clients with Part D may be eligible for a program that can help them better manage their health and medications. Medication Therapy Management (MTM) is a free program available through all Part D plans to certain members who have multiple chronic conditions, take multiple medications, and are at risk for spending more on annual Part D covered drug costs than a certain cost threshold. Federal law has required these MTM programs since Part D was launched in 2006, however, MTM programs are severely underutilized. Yet they can be of huge benefit to your eligible clients, especially vulnerable populations.

Here you can learn more about the MTM program, how MTM services can help your clients, and how eligible clients can take advantage of the services that MTM has to offer.

What is Medication Therapy Management?

Medication Therapy Management (MTM) is a free program offered by Part D plans to certain members to help improve their medication use so they can better manage their chronic conditions (e.g., diabetes, hypertension, asthma) and improve their overall health. MTM is designed to be patient-centric. It includes an annual comprehensive medication review (CMR), including a face-to-face or telehealth consultation and written summary provided by a pharmacist or other qualified health provider (e.g., physician), and quarterly follow-ups for ongoing monitoring and assistance. In the event the beneficiary is unable to participate in the CMR, the beneficiary's caregiver or authorized agent may participate on their behalf.

How can MTM programs help?

MTM services can improve medication use and adherence and promote health quality outcomes. For example, MTM can help prevent adverse drug interactions for members taking multiple medications. MTM also offers shared cost savings. Through improved medication use, members may spend less annually on their medications, which in turn saves costs to the overall Part D program. MTM programs also provide opportunities for vulnerable members to ask qualified health care professionals (e.g., pharmacists) questions or share concerns about their medications.

Who is eligible?

Plans have some flexibility to determine which members to target for MTM services. There are three general eligibility requirements. Current federal guidelines require Part D plans to target plan members who have multiple chronic conditions (at least two or more of the "core" chronic conditions; see list below), **AND** are taking multiple Part D drugs (two to eight drugs), **AND** are likely to spend more than \$3,967 (in 2018) and \$4,044 (in 2019) in

annual out-of-pocket costs for covered Part D drugs. Additionally, plans are encouraged to offer MTM services to beneficiaries that meet plan internal criteria for opioid over-utilization, especially in the treatment of patients with chronic non-cancer pain.

The “core” chronic conditions include (and plans must target at least five of nine core chronic conditions):

- Alzheimer’s Disease
- Bone Disease Arthritis (e.g., osteoporosis, osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis)
- Chronic Heart Failure
- Diabetes
- Dyslipidemia (abnormal amount of lipids, such as cholesterol or fat, in the blood)
- End-Stage Renal Disease (ESRD)
- Hypertension
- Mental health disorder (e.g., depression, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, chronic or disabling disorder)
- Respiratory disease (e.g., asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, or COPD) or chronic lung disorder

Within these eligibility guidelines, Part D plans can select their MTM criteria, such as deciding which chronic conditions they want to focus their MTM on, and how many Part D drugs are required for eligibility (e.g., eight drugs). Your clients will need to check with their Part D plan to find out the specific MTM criteria.

How do clients enroll in MTM?

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) requires that all plans automatically enroll plan members who meet their MTM criteria. Auto-enrolled members can decide whether to participate in the MTM program, opt out, or refuse or decline MTM services without having to actually dis-enroll from the MTM program. Members’ participation or non-participation in MTM services does not affect their enrollment in their Part D plan.

How can you help your clients?

In addition to sharing information about the MTM program, you can help your clients by encouraging them to contact their Part D plan to find out about available MTM services. Many of your clients may already be enrolled in their plan’s MTM, but they may not be taking advantage of the services. Plans have flexibility to decide how MTM providers (e.g., pharmacists) will notify members about MTM services, so your clients should check with

their plan to find out how they get the initial comprehensive review and/or ongoing follow-up reviews.

CMS initially estimated that 25% of Part D members would meet the criteria for MTM services. However, data since 2006 shows roughly a 10% participation rate.¹ The low participation rate can be attributed to several factors, including variability. For example, Part D plan sponsors can choose which populations to target, so while your client may be enrolled in a plan that does not target their chronic condition, another plan may target that condition. And, plans may require a higher number of Part D drugs for eligibility (data from past years shows that most plans required at least eight medications). Also, members may be under the annual cost threshold \$3,967 (in 2018) and \$4,044 (in 2019) because they purchase lower cost generics. There have also been some findings of racial disparities in enrollment, in which Hispanic and African-American beneficiaries were less likely to meet cost utilization criteria.

With your help, clients can learn more about MTM programs from their plan, through the annual *Medicare & You* handbook, and online at the Medicare Plan Finder under “Your Plan Details”.

Additional Resources

2019 Part C and D Final Rule and Call Letter <https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Health-Plans/MedicareAdvtgSpecRateStats/Downloads/Announcement2019.pdf>

CY 2019 Medication Therapy Management Program Guidance

<https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Prescription-Drug-Coverage/PrescriptionDrugCovContra/Downloads/Memo-Contract-Year-2019-Medication-Therapy-Management-MTM-Program-Submission-v-040618.pdf>

Medicare.gov: <https://www.medicare.gov/part-d/coverage/medication-therapy-management/medication-therapy-programs.html>

Part D Manual, Chapter 7 – MTMP, page 10: <http://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Prescription-Drug-Coverage/PrescriptionDrugCovContra/Downloads/Chapter7.pdf>

Avalere, August 2014, Few Medicare Beneficiaries Receive Comprehensive MTM Services: <http://avalere.com/expertise/managed-care/insights/few-medicare-beneficiaries-receive-comprehensive-medication-management-serv>

¹ <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2018/04/16/2018-07179/medicare-program-contract-year-2019-policy-and-technical-changes-to-the-medicare-advantage-medicare>