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Contact: Katheryn Cofone  
202-778-1479

**NEW NATIONAL SURVEY REVEALS EIGHT IN 10 SENIORS SATISFIED WITH MEDICARE DRUG BENEFIT**  
***Medicare Today releases new survey data on Medicare prescription drug benefit***

WASHINGTON, DC – Healthcare leaders today announced the latest results of a national survey of seniors showing that the vast majority of Medicare beneficiaries remain satisfied with the Medicare Part D drug benefit. *Medicare Today* has been tracking senior satisfaction with the drug benefit since 2006.

The survey, commissioned by *Medicare Today*, a project of the Healthcare Leadership Council, and conducted in March by KRC Research, confirms that senior Medicare beneficiaries continue to see the prescription drug program as a success. Overall satisfaction with the Medicare prescription drug benefit has grown from 78 percent to 84 percent, up six points since early 2006.

“Before the Medicare Part D drug benefit was created, many seniors faced uncertainty when it came to accessing prescription drugs. The drug benefit provides millions of seniors with peace of mind,” said Mary R. Grealy, president of the Healthcare Leadership Council, a coalition of the nation’s leading health care companies and organizations

“With the economic crisis threatening many household budgets, it is important that Medicare Part D drug benefit continue to provide access to prescription drugs to the millions of seniors who depend on the program to help them live healthy lives,” said former U.S. Senator and *Medicare Today* Co-Chairman John Breaux. “And in light of the growing debate about health care reform this year, it’s important to understand the value of the Medicare prescription drug benefit as a part of the U.S. health care system and how seniors feel about the benefit.”

“We also need to make sure that seniors know that a low income subsidy is available for those who may need extra financial assistance,” Grealy added.

Unfortunately, not all eligible seniors have enrolled in Medicare Part D. *Medicare Today* is encouraging seniors to take advantage of this health care benefit. For those seniors who need extra financial assistance, a low income subsidy is available to help pay for their coverage. Nearly four in 10 seniors who would likely qualify for extra financial assistance are not aware that the low income subsidy exists.

Despite annual changes to prescription drug plan options, survey findings continue to show widespread support for the program. In addition to high satisfaction rates, the survey found that beneficiaries are saving money under Medicare Part D prescription drug plans. With 88 percent of seniors surveyed

stating that their plan offers good value and nearly 70 percent reporting that they've lowered their prescription drug spending, the program costs less than was originally predicted.

Seniors across various demographics and political party lines continue to have positive feelings towards Medicare Part D, citing convenience, smooth operations and fair prices as reasons why they feel their plans are working well. More than 90 percent of seniors feel fortunate to have Part D and say it gives them peace of mind. Most seniors agree that their plan is delivering what it said it would when they signed up, and almost three in ten now get medications they once had to skip or ration.

Prior to the addition of Part D coverage, millions of Medicare beneficiaries had coverage for hospital and doctor expenses, but not prescription drug expenses. Today, all Medicare beneficiaries have access to coverage and lifesaving medicines and more than 90 percent of seniors have signed up. Beneficiaries can choose an affordable plan to meet their individual needs, and they can change it yearly if they're not satisfied. The program offers a wide variety of plan choices to fit every budget.

Current and potential beneficiaries can speak with a Medicare counselor for information about the benefit by calling 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). To prepare for a discussion with a counselor, beneficiaries should have on hand a list of the prescription drugs they take, including the dosage and frequency, and a preferred pharmacy.

The Social Security Administration can also provide assistance for those who may qualify financially for extra help with the cost of prescription drugs. Medicare beneficiaries interested in applying for extra help or those who have previously applied and want to check their status can call 1-800- 772-1213 to contact their local Social Security office.

#### *About the Survey*

*This nationally representative telephone survey of Medicare Part D beneficiaries was conducted March 19-25, 2009. The margin of error for seniors with a Medicare Rx plan is plus or minus 4.9 percentage points. To view the survey results in their entirety, go to [www.medicaretoday.org](http://www.medicaretoday.org).*

#### *About Medicare Today*

*Healthcare Leadership Council launched Medicare Today in November 2004 to reach out to Medicare beneficiaries who needed reliable information on how to get the greatest value from the new Medicare benefits. Medicare Today administers the partnership of over 400 national and local organizations including AARP, National Association of Family Physicians, and National Alliance for Hispanic Health. Medicare Today develops innovative tools for use by all partners, commissions research studies, and undertakes earned media efforts and outreach to inform beneficiaries about the value of the new benefits under the Medicare Modernization Act (MMA).*

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