Prescription prices out of reach?

For an individual or family on a fixed income, increases to prescription drug costs can hit hard. Take Barbara, a 79-year-old Edmonds woman, who was prescribed several inhalers to treat her chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).

With the help of two prescription assistance programs, she was able to save $400 per month on her medication costs.

Many older adults on Medicare have signed up for Part D plans, Medicare’s prescription drug benefit, to provide them with insurance coverage for generic and brand name medications. But it’s critical that they sign up for a plan that best fits their needs.

“Medicare Part D does a great job covering generics,” said Rod Shutt, program coordinator of the Prescription Drug Assistance Network (PDAN).

“Where it falls short a bit is for expensive brand name medications. They’re usually covered reasonably well until you hit the donut hole or coverage gap. But the drugs are so expensive, you reach that point in several months and then your monthly cost increases.”

What that means for adults on prescription medications that do not have generics available is that the out-of-pocket cost of their medications can skyrocket, like what happened to Barbara from Edmonds. Thankfully, she was able to connect with Shutt and the PDAN to learn about programs that help reduce the cost.

For uninsured patients, PDAN can assist with applying for manufacturer’s assistance programs, discount cards, and coupons.

(continued inside)
Case management services available through Verdant

Verdant Community Social Worker Nancy Budd, MSW (pictured at left) provides free care coordination for clients in South Snohomish County with multiple health and social service needs. This case management model can fill or bridge service gaps for more complex client needs, ensuring privacy and the use of best practices.

Services available:

- Case management for physical health issues, mental health concerns, and substance use disorders
- Support navigating healthcare needs
- Help to understand and follow care plans
- Guidance to enhance existing skills

Eligibility:

- Individuals with multiple health and/or social service needs
- Individuals who reside in or are supported by services in Verdant’s service area
- Clients committed to fully participating and a desire for lifestyle change

For more information email nancy.budd@verdanthealth.org or call (425) 967-6041.

Basic needs referrals & info: For individuals with basic needs, visit or call Volunteers of America North Sound 2-1-1 Community Resource Advocate (CRA) Aaron King, who is located at Verdant, at (425) 582-8970 or dial 2-1-1 directly for help.

Prescription prices (continued from cover)

For those with employer or exchange coverage, there are often co-pay assistance cards that can help cover the out-of-pocket costs for expensive brand name medications. PDAN can assist patients to find the right co-pay card for their medications.

The most common medications with which PDAN helps individuals are heart conditions, respiratory conditions, diabetes, anxiety, and depression. Shutt and others can help individuals navigate the application processes for these programs, but it is important to keep in mind these requirements:

- There are hundreds of prescription assistance programs being offered by pharmaceutical companies, but they are based specifically on the medication. If you connect with the PDAN, have a list of your medications.
- There are income requirements for most programs.

Capturing the voice of our community

South Snohomish County is an incredibly diverse community and the voices of the people add to its vibrancy and story. We at Verdant would like to capture and preserve as much of that voice as possible.

One of the many ways we are doing this is by creating community art pieces to display at Verdant. Local artist Fred Lisaius collected handwritten words and simple drawings that represent “health” and “community” from our residents during events over the summer. More than 300 residents participated in the project, impressing the artist.

“It has been such a pleasure meeting so many community members and it was remarkable to see such joy and diversity represented in the words and drawings they contributed to this project,” Lisaius said. “I am very excited to complete this work and present it to your community next year.”

If you would like to contribute to the art project, there is still time! Email info@verdanthealth.org to find out how you can take part between now and the end of November 2018. We look forward to sharing the finished product with you in 2019.

Sincerely,

Robin Fenn, Ph.D., LICSW
Superintendent

Giving Thanks

Message from the Superintendent

Someone asked me recently what I was most thankful for in my second year as Superintendent. As I quickly went through the list, it was pointed out to me that none were actually “things”; they were people. I could easily list the many positive traits of the Verdant staff and elected commissioners as well as our other elected officials who serve the district. We often take for granted the providers, the first responders, and the city employees who work tirelessly behind the scenes to make sure we are healthy and secure.

It is our residents, though, who have the strongest impact on me and for whom I am most thankful. I am encouraged every day when I see people coming to our health classes or when I hear about the walking groups that met to walk in the rain. I am deeply moved when I watch a suffering veteran reach out for help for the first time or when the new young mother who barely speaks English joins a parenting group. I often leave the office in awe of these people as I know that taking the steps to improve one’s health and circumstances can often be challenging.

It is the people in the community, however, whose efforts truly shape our neighborhoods and spaces and that are our most important resource.

For More Information

Contact Program Coordinator Rod Shutt at (206) 518-0839 or rods@prescriptiondrugassistance.org. Rod sees clients by appointment on Wednesday mornings at Verdant.

Contact volunteer Michelle Valentine at (425) 361-9549. Michelle sees clients as walk-ins or by appointment on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of the month from 10 a.m.–12 p.m. at the Mountlake Terrace Senior Center.
Flu shots protect us all

The flu vaccination is one of the best ways to protect yourself and others. It’s recommended for everyone, especially those who are at high risk of complications from the flu, such as:
- Young children under 5
- Older adults over 65
- Pregnant women
- People with certain health conditions

Flu vaccination is the only way to prevent the flu. However, no one can be guaranteed they won’t get sick. There are many reasons for this, such as:
- The flu vaccine is not 100% effective
- The flu vaccine is not given over a long period of time
- The flu vaccine is not given to everyone

Even if you’ve been vaccinated, you can still get sick with the flu. It’s important to take steps to prevent the flu, such as:
- Washing your hands regularly
- Covering your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze
- Avoiding close contact with sick people
- Getting vaccinated annually

The flu vaccine is recommended for everyone who is at risk of flu complications. This includes:
- People who have chronic health conditions
- People who live in nursing homes or long-term care facilities
- People who have a weak immune system
- People who have certain medical conditions, such as asthma or diabetes

The flu vaccine is available at many locations, including:
- Your doctor’s office or clinic
- A local pharmacy
- A local health department
- A local clinic

The flu vaccine is safe and effective. It’s the best way to protect yourself and others from the flu. It’s important to get vaccinated every year, even if you were vaccinated last year. This is because:
- The flu vaccine changes each year
- The flu vaccine is not 100% effective

The flu vaccine is available at many locations, including:
- Your doctor’s office or clinic
- A local pharmacy
- A local health department
- A local clinic

Get vaccinated today to protect yourself and others from the flu.
About The Canopy

The mission of the Verdant Health Commission is to improve the health and well-being of our community. We bring together community partners and individuals interested in improving their health or the health of others under the umbrella topic of wellness. Our work in this area is similar to a canopy’s work in nature: supporting and protecting the forest it covers. We hope that through this newsletter, The Canopy, you will learn about our programs and find ways to support your health by engaging with us.

Get Involved: Community Health & Wellness Events

Learn about these events and others, by visiting verdanthealth.org/events. All events below are free unless otherwise listed and take place at the Verdant Community Wellness Center, 4710 196th St. SW in Lynnwood, (425) 582-8600. Pre-registration required.

Using Yoga to Manage Holiday Stress
Wednesdays, Nov. 7, 14, 28, & Dec. 5, 6–7 p.m.

Cooking Demo: Diabetes-friendly Holiday Recipes
Wednesday, Nov. 14, 3–4:30 p.m.

Learn & Taste: Nutrition for Cancer Prevention
Thursday, Nov. 15, 6–8 p.m.

Core Strength & Improving Balance
Wednesdays, Nov. 28, Dec. 5, 12, & 19, 1:30–2:30 p.m.
$20 fee to participate, scholarships available

Learn & Taste: Healthy Bites for the Holidays
Thursday, Dec. 6, 6–8 p.m.

Hands-on Cooking Class for Families: Healthy Holiday Treats
Saturday, Dec. 8, 10 a.m.–12 p.m.