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**GOVERNOR HALEY BARBOUR, DIVISION OF MEDICAID LAUNCH
“ONE-ON-ONE” DRUG COVERAGE ENROLLMENT CAMPAIGN**

14,000 Out of 47,000 PLADs Recipients Already Contacted

(Jackson, Miss.) — Starting today, Medicaid officials are contacting thousands of Medicaid recipients by phone and using a new computer analysis to help them sign up for a Medicaid Drug Discount Card and access free and discounted drug programs. This is part of a comprehensive communications effort now under way to help PLADs beneficiaries ease their transition to Medicare.

The Division of Medicaid has received a specially-designed computer data that matches PLADs beneficiaries with the alternative health care coverage that best meets their prescription drug needs. The program eliminates the time-consuming research process many beneficiaries have to go through to get matched to the right coverage. In the last two weeks the Division of Medicaid contacted 14,000 PLADs recipients. That contact rate is expected to increase with the new program data.

Medicaid experts will walk recipients through the application process and send them the forms, ready for a signature. In some cases, the recipients also may need to get a doctor's signature.

Governor Barbour says the launch of this effort is one of the reasons why he extended the transition deadline to September 15. “We will be very aggressive in our information and assistance campaign until we feel like we have done our best in contacting every single person affected. We do not have a coverage gap, but an information gap and this approach is closing that gap,” said Governor Haley Barbour.

The Legislature passed this Medicaid legislation during the Regular Session to keep the cash-strapped Medicaid program sustainable by saving millions in moving PLADs recipients to federal Medicare.



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“We have given every caseworker at our 25 regional offices a large number of PLADs cases to complete over the phone each day. We will attempt to reach all 47,000 over the next month and sign them up for the Medicare Discount Drug Card and the appropriate Patient Assistance Programs,” said Medicaid Executive Director Dr. Warren Jones. “So far, the PLADs beneficiaries we have talked to have been very relieved to learn of the comparable coverage available to them, and our caseworkers are reporting that these recipients appreciate the individualized, personal contact we are providing,” he added.

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