



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 23, 2005

CONTACT: Brian Franklin 202.312.1098
Medicare Rx Education Network

STATEMENT

Former U.S. Senator John Breaux, chairman of the Medicare Rx Education Network, made the following statement today regarding the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services announcement of plans selected to provide the agency's prescription drug coverage:

“Medicare beneficiaries have now begun to receive the information they will need to help decide about the new prescription drug benefit. This initial information helps clarify for people in Medicare how they will be able to personalize the benefit and determine personal savings.

“We’re one step closer to the prescription drug coverage that offers people in Medicare a lifetime of security, guaranteed access to medicines and the peace of mind of insurance. This next phase, which begins in about a week, is when individual plans can be examined and reviewed. We are encouraging Medicare beneficiaries to review materials with family, friends, neighbors and healthcare providers so they fully understand this new addition to Medicare.

“This is an exciting time for Medicare and the people who need it. Thanks to the competition built into the law, the plans will provide savings and choices that are broader than anyone anticipated. You can choose a plan based on what is most important to you: convenience, cost and coverage.”

###

In early October, people in Medicare will begin to receive detailed information about each Medicare-approved prescription drug plan. In mid-October, Medicare’s plan finder (www.Medicare.gov) will be available to compare plans. For more information on the Medicare prescription drug benefit, visit www.Medicare.gov or www.MedicareRxEducation.org.

The Medicare Rx Education Network provides information and assistance with outreach and enrollment for the new Medicare Part D prescription drug benefit. The network, which includes 70 national organizations, is chaired by former U.S. Senator John Breaux. Members share an interest in educating Medicare beneficiaries about the new Medicare prescription drug benefit and will work closely with the appropriate federal agencies to obtain up-to-date information to ensure that information disseminated by the network about Medicare Part D is factual and accurately conveyed, thereby pre-empting confusion about the benefit and equipping beneficiaries and their caregivers to make informed choices. By sharing information with each other about member organizations’ independent efforts, collaborating on activities, and identifying ways to work together, the network aims to eliminate duplication of efforts and maximize the effectiveness of outreach efforts. The network does not engage in legislative activities or take positions on pending legislative or administrative policies related to the Part D benefit and its implementation.