

Status report on Part D

ISSUE: Medicare's outpatient prescription drug benefit is about to enter its eighth year of operation. In this session, staff will provide information on beneficiaries' access to medications and program costs, and discuss the role of competition in Part D.

KEY POINTS: We will review information about the numbers of stand-alone and Medicare Advantage prescription drug plans participating in Part D for 2013 and the types of benefit designs they offer, the number of plans with premiums at or below the regional thresholds for low-income premium subsidies, and trends in the aggregate spending levels for Part D. We will also discuss findings from our analysis of plan switching by Part D enrollees to understand better how competition is working in Part D.

ACTION: Commissioners should provide comments on the scope and substance of this analysis.

STAFF CONTACT: Shinobu Suzuki (202-220-3700)