

Understanding OptumRx

On January 1, 2018, retirees who receive their prescription benefits through the School Employees' Health Benefits Program (SEHBP) will now have OptumRx, not Express Scripts, as their prescription benefits provider. The new carrier will serve the same level of benefits – with no change in copays or out-of-pocket maximums – that retirees have enjoyed for the last five years. Members should expect to receive their new prescription card later this month, prior to the switch on Jan. 1.

Switch saves \$1.6 billion

Earlier this summer, the state began the bidding process for the prescription drug program because the contract

with Express Scripts is set to expire at the end of this calendar year. For the first time ever, an online auction system designed to make prescription drug benefit providers bid against each other in a transparent and much more competitive way was used to solicit bids. With a cost that is more than 10 percent below what the state was projected to spend on prescription cost, OptumRx, Inc. won the bid for a three-year period beginning Jan. 1. Both the State Health Benefits Plan (SHBP) and SEHBP will collectively save a total of at least \$1.6 billion during the three-year OptumRx contract. However, it is important to note that any changes in copays and out-of-pocket charges that SHBP

members incur will NOT affect SEHBP members.

OptumRx has committed to working with both the Division of Pensions and Benefits and NJEA to ensure that the transition is as smooth as possible. As a result, most mail-away prescriptions will transfer to OptumRx and will be filled by the new home delivery services. However, retirees should remember to update their billing information prior to their prescription being filled. Similarly, prescriptions filled at a retail pharmacy will need to be updated with a member's new prescription card before refilling those prescriptions.

How to learn more

OptumRx has a variety of ways to share information with

SEHBP enrollees. For those tech-savvy members, there is a website specifically for public employees in New Jersey www.optumrx.com/stateofnewjersey and an app for your tablet or smartphone.

NJEA has developed a Q & A fact sheet, which provides answers to immediate questions retirees may have about the switch to OptumRx. This fact sheet was initially distributed at the NJREA Convention last month and is available to view online by visiting www.njea.org/optumrx. Should you have any remaining questions about your prescriptions or the switch, please use the OptumRx website link at www.optumrx.com/stateofnewjersey or call 844-368-8740.