

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT:  
NYS Epic drug supplement program going through dramatic changes.  
Free educational sessions – “Choosing the Best Medicare Drug Plan”.**

**Saugerties and Woodstock, NY:** Open enrollment for Medicare Drug plans begins October 15th. Pharmacist Neal Smoller, co-owner of Village Apothecary in Saugerties and owner of Woodstock Apothecary in Woodstock will be hosting an informational session on "Choosing the Best Medicare Drug Plan".

Currently there are 33 Medicare Drug plans for Ulster County residents to choose from. Plans should be individualized based on a patient's own medications; a husband and wife may have two different plans. Navigating this maze is confusing, even for healthcare practitioners and especially so for senior citizens.

On top of this, starting in 2012, the NYS Epic drug supplement program will go through dramatic changes. "New York is broke and the Epic program is being essentially defunded," Smoller says. "These changes will increase patient out of pocket costs which could result in choosing their wallets over their health." The pharmacists have a plan to help patients keep their out of pocket expenses low for 2012 even with these changes.

The Apothecary's educational session "Choosing the Best Medicare Drug Plan" is a way to teach this confusing topic to patients and empower them to be active in the selection process. The session will last 45 minutes with time before, after, and during for questions.

Topics of discussion will include:

- The ABCD's of Medicare
- Choosing the Best Plan for YOU
- Tips to avoid the "Donut Hole" and lower drug costs
- The EPIC changes, and how to keep medication expenses low.

The educational sessions will be free to the public. The first session will be held at the Senior Citizen's Center in Saugerties on Thursday, October 13th from 530-730pm. The second session will be held in Woodstock Town Hall in Woodstock on Friday, October 14th from 530-730pm.

Staff will be on hand to answer any questions and set up appointments for patients to review their individual plans one-on-one with an Apothecary pharmacist.

We are encouraging patients to sign up in advance, but it is not necessary. Do so with Casie at 845-247-0010 in Saugerties or 845-679-0790 in Woodstock.

**About the Apothecaries:** Village Apothecary in Saugerties and Woodstock Apothecary in Woodstock are family owned, service oriented hometown pharmacies. Patient care comes first, with staff going above and beyond to provide the best service to each individual patient. Village Apothecary is also the Hudson Valley's first nationally accredited compounding pharmacy. Woodstock Apothecary is the Mid-Hudson Valley's first fully integrated pharmacy with an herbalist dispensing supplements and vitamins alongside pharmacists dispensing traditional therapies. Both pharmacies provide immunization services including flu, pneumonia, and shingles vaccinations. For more information on Village Apothecary, visit

[www.SaugertiesRx.com](http://www.SaugertiesRx.com) or call 845-247-0010. For Woodstock Apothecary, visit [www.MyWoodstockRx.com](http://www.MyWoodstockRx.com) or call 845-679-0790.