

Creditable Coverage Simplified Determination

This document is an update of the Simplified Determination of Creditable Coverage Status which was released on September 15, 2006 in the Creditable Coverage Guidance.

Benefit Designs for Simplified Determination of Creditable Coverage Status

If an entity is not an employer or union that is applying for the retiree drug subsidy, it can use the simplified determination of creditable coverage status annually to determine whether its prescription drug plan's coverage is creditable or not. The plan will be determined to be creditable if the plan prescription drug plan design meets all four of the following standards. However, the standards listed under 4(a) and 4(b) may not be used if the entity's plan has prescription drug benefits that are integrated with benefits other than prescription drug coverage (i.e. Medical, Dental, etc.). Integrated plans must satisfy the standard in 4(c).

A prescription drug plan is deemed to be creditable if it:

- 1) Provides coverage for brand and generic prescriptions;
- 2) Provides reasonable access to retail providers and, optionally, for mail order coverage;
- 3) The plan is designed to pay on average at least 60% of participants' prescription drug expenses; and
- 4) Satisfies at least one of the following:
 - a) The prescription drug coverage has no annual benefit maximum benefit or a maximum annual benefit payable by the plan of at least \$25,000, or
 - b) The prescription drug coverage has an actuarial expectation that the amount payable by the plan will be at least \$2,000 annually per Medicare eligible individual.
 - c) For entities that have integrated health coverage, the integrated health plan has no more than a \$250 deductible per year, has no annual benefit maximum or a maximum annual benefit payable by the plan of at least \$25,000 and has no less than a \$1,000,000 lifetime combined benefit maximum.

Integrated Plan - An integrated plan is any plan of benefits that is offered to a Medicare eligible individual where the prescription drug benefit is combined with other coverage offered by the entity (i.e., medical, dental, vision, etc.) and the plan has all of the following plan provisions:

- 1) a combined plan year deductible for all benefits under the plan,
- 2) a combined annual benefit maximum for all benefits under the plan, and
- 3) a combined lifetime benefit maximum for all benefits under the plan.

A prescription drug plan that meets the above parameters is considered an integrated plan for the purpose of using the simplified method and would have to meet steps 1, 2, 3 and 4(c) of the simplified method. If it does not meet all of the criteria, then it is not considered to be an integrated plan and would have to meet steps 1, 2, 3 and either 4(a) or 4(b).

NOTE: If the entity can not use the Simplified Determination method stated above to determine the creditable coverage status of the prescription drug plan offered to Medicare eligible individuals, then the entity must make an actuarial determination annually of whether the expected amount of paid claims under the entity's prescription drug coverage is at least as much as the expected amount of paid claims under the standard Medicare prescription drug benefit.