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| LOCAL COMMISSIONERS MEMORANDUM |
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DSS-4037EL (Rev. 9/89)

Transmittal No: 91 LCM-66

Date: April 18, 1991

Division: Medical Assistance

TO: Local District Commissioners

SUBJECT: Voluntary mail service program for maintenance prescription drugs.

ATTACHMENTS: None

This is to inform you that the New York State Department of Social Services has entered into an agreement with NRx Services, Inc., (NRx) a mail services pharmacy located near Albany, New York. NRx will provide long-term maintenance drugs by mail to New York State Medical Assistance (Medicaid) Program recipients who are the fiscal responsibility of counties other than the five boroughs of New York City. This new service is expected to be made available in May 1991.

The purpose of this service is to provide Medicaid recipients with the convenience of mail service pharmacy at a cost savings to local districts and the Department. Savings result from a negotiated discount in ingredient costs and lower dispensing fees. The program design is voluntary. Medicaid recipients will be free to choose between mail service pharmacy or community pharmacy services.

The mail service pharmacy may dispense up to a ninety day supply of maintenance drugs at one time. Long-term maintenance drugs are those prescription drugs that are usually prescribed to treat chronic conditions such as high blood pressure or heart conditions. The individual drugs identified by the Department to be long-term maintenance have an LTM (long-term maintenance) indicator next to the drug on the microfiche which is sent to enrolled Medicaid pharmacy providers. This microfiche is entitled "New

York State Department of Social Services List of Medicaid Reimbursable Drugs".

The Department believes recipients using NRx will receive a quality service. This mail service pharmacy has contractually agreed to dispense 99% of the prescriptions received within five business days after the date on which they are received. NRx will maintain patient profiles and conduct drug utilization review for each prescription received. Early refill requests will be refused or pended until an appropriate time period has passed for the refill to be sent. In addition to the above services, NRx will have a toll free telephone number which recipients can call with questions about the mail service program including which specific drugs are covered. This toll free number is 1-800-445-9707. A pharmacist will be available for telephone consultation 8:00 am to 8:00 pm Monday through Friday and 8:00 am through 12 noon Saturday. Calls outside of these hours will be answered by an answering service. When necessary the telephone answering service will page the pharmacist on call, to answer questions.

NRx will market this prescription service by an initial mailing to Medicaid recipients who have been identified by the Department to be users of maintenance drugs. NRx will be sending marketing information to locations which are frequented by Medical Assistance recipients, including local district offices. This information will describe the mail service pharmacy option and the convenience of its use. NRx will designate a representative who will be available to work with the local districts in resolving problems connected with the prescription service as well as marketing the service.

NRx will be enrolled as a pharmacy provider in the New York State Medicaid Program and will be subject to all Department regulations applicable to Medicaid providers.

If you have any questions regarding this new prescription delivery service you may contact Eileen Rutkowski, Department of Social Services/Medical Assistance at 800-342-3715 ext. 3-5656.

Jo-Ann A. Costantino
Deputy Commissioner
Division of Medical Assistance