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APA, Coalition Launch MentalHealthPartD.org*Web Site Answers Questions about New Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit*

Arlington, Va. – Today the American Psychiatric Association (APA), in partnership with six other mental health organizations, launched a new Web site, www.MentalHealthPartD.org, to help psychiatrists understand and assist their patients in making decisions about the new Medicare prescription drug benefit.

The benefit, known as Medicare Part D, goes into effect in less than four months – on Jan. 1, 2006 – and is widely expected to generate questions, and perhaps some confusion, for psychiatrists, other treatment providers, patients and their families. The Web site was created to provide comprehensive information to psychiatrists and other physicians, healthcare providers at community behavioral health and integrated health centers, and consumers and their families.

“My advice is to know who your Medicare patients are and who your Medicare-Medicaid dually eligible patients are because these people may need your help with making choices about the new benefit,” said APA President Steven S. Sharfstein, M.D. “Especially when enrollment begins on Nov. 15, patients and their families will need information – quickly and accurately. MentalHealthPartD.org has been designed to answer their questions about access to mental health prescription drugs and navigating the new program.”

Topics covered on www.MentalHealthPartD.org include:

- Enrollment and eligibility for the new benefit
- Patient costs and subsidies
- Drug formularies and coverage determinations, exceptions and appeals
- Continuity of care
- And much more.

The coalition responsible for creating www.MentalHealthPartD.org consists of the APA, the American Association of Community Psychiatrists (AACCP), the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors (NASHPD), the National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare (NCCBH), the National Mental Health Association (NMHA) and the Treatment Effectiveness Now (TEN) project.

About the American Psychiatric Association:

The American Psychiatric Association is a national medical specialty society whose more than 36,000 physician members specialize in the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of mental illnesses including substance use disorders. Visit the APA at www.psych.org and www.healthyminds.org.

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