



# MARYLAND MEDICAID PHARMACY PROGRAM

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## ADVISORY

*In an effort to give timely notice to the pharmacy community concerning important pharmacy topics, the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's (DHMH) Maryland Medicaid Pharmacy Program (MMPP) has developed the Maryland Medicaid Pharmacy Program Advisory. To expedite information timely to the pharmacy and prescriber communities, an email network has been established which incorporates the email lists of the Maryland Pharmacists Association, EPIC, CARE, Long Term Care Consultants, headquarters of all chain drugstores and prescriber associations and organizations. It is our hope that the information is disseminated to all interested parties. If you have not received this email through any of the previously noted parties or via DHMH, please contact the MMPP representative at 410-767-1455.*

### **Generic Lexapro (escitalopram) Becomes Preferred on Maryland Medicaid Preferred Drug List (PDL)**

In order for the State to enhance the benefit of the PDL, in some instances the multisource brand name drug is Preferred over its generic equivalent, because the branded drug is less costly than its generic counterpart. This happens most often in cases of newly released generics. After the exclusivity period for a new generic expires, prices of the generic drug often drop significantly.

Following this pricing pattern, **effective September 25**, generic escitalopram will become preferred, and claims for the drug will be handled in the same manner as claims for other multisource drugs. Fee-for-service Medicaid claims for Lexapro<sup>®</sup> will adjudicate only if there is prior authorization based on an approved Medwatch.

To check on whether prior authorization is needed for a drug or whether there is a quantity limit for Maryland Medicaid drugs refer to <http://www.epocrates.com/> on your desktop computer or PDA/Smartphone. Epocrates is updated regularly.