



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph P. Addabbo Jr.

Addabbo Co-Sponsors Senior Lecture Series WITH NYS Department of Health's Medicare-Epic Program: "Epic Changes Coming in January 2013"

Joseph P. Addabbo Jr

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Queens, NY, August 29, 2012 – NYS Senator **Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr.**, is co-sponsoring a lecture series, "Changes to EPIC," with a representative from the NYS Department of Health's Medicare-EPIC Program, Gema Diaz. The ongoing series will continue to run in September and October at various senior centers or AARP chapters in the senator's district and covers the changes to New York's Elderly Pharmaceutical Insurance Coverage (EPIC) prescription-drug program, now that the 2012-13 state budget restored \$30.6 million. This will reinstate co-payment assistance for almost 300,000 EPIC enrollees, thereby returning the

EPIC program to two plans again.

In January 2012, more than a quarter of a million seniors around our state were affected by major cuts to New York's Elderly Pharmaceutical Insurance Coverage (EPIC) prescription-drug program. Consequently, EPIC provided prescription-drug coverage only after a member fell into the Medicare prescription coverage gap (the "doughnut hole") when the total drug costs for an individual reached \$2,930.

Currently, seniors enrolled in the EPIC program are forced to pay 25 percent of the cost of each prescription drug. With the co-payment assistance restored, enrollees will return to paying no more than \$20 co-payment for each prescription.

All EPIC members will be notified of the changes, and how they will be affected, by letter. Eligibility requirements remain the same: NYS resident, 65 or older, with income up to \$35,000 single or \$50,000 married. Applicants cannot be receiving full Medicaid benefits but may have a Medicaid spenddown. If a member cancels their Medicare Part D coverage, they will not receive any benefits from EPIC and coverage may be canceled. Members must have Part D in order to receive EPIC benefits and maintain EPIC coverage.

To help Addabbo's huge senior population in his district conveniently prepare for these January 1, 2013 changes, the senator's office has set the next two EPIC lectures for September:

- Tuesday, 9/18/12 @ 11:00 AM, Peter Cardella Senior Center, 68-52 Fresh Pond Rd., Ridgewood
- Wednesday, 9/19/12 @ 1:00 PM, AARP Rego Park/Elmhurst Chapter, Knights of Columbus Hall, 69-60 Grand Avenue, Maspeth

Three more lectures are set for October at another senior center in Ridgewood and at Golden Age Clubs supported by churches in Glendale and Middle Village. For more information, call Addabbo's two district offices at Howard Beach (718-738-1111) and Middle Village (718-497-1630).

Visit Senator Addabbo online at: <http://addabbo.nysenate.gov> or on Facebook at "Senator Joe Addabbo."

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