

Office of the Governor

NEWS RELEASE

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STATE TO LIMIT SUBSIDIZED VIAGRA PRESCRIPTIONS

State Treasurer James A. DiEleuterio, Jr., Human Services Commissioner William Waldman, and Health and Senior Services Commissioner Len Fishman today announced that the state of New Jersey will limit the number of Viagra tablets that will be subsidized by taxpayers through the Pharmaceutical Assistance for the Aged and Disabled, the Medicaid program, the Traditional, NJ Plus, and the State Prescription Drug plans in the State Health Benefits system and the General Assistance welfare program.

The four-tablet-per-month limit will be imposed as an interim measure while the state awaits direction from the federal government regarding subsidized dispensing of the anti-impotence medication.

The Treasurer today predicted that unless there are changes in the PAAD program and Medicaid, the state will spend \$6 million next year for Viagra prescriptions. Projections have not been made for possible Viagra-related cost increases for the General Assistance Program and the State Health Benefits Program.

During the month of April alone, the state spent \$483,000 on subsidized Viagra prescriptions. \$170,000 was expended for PAAD recipients, \$162,000 was spent for participants in the State Health Benefits Plan, \$136,000 was spent for Medicaid recipients and \$15,000 for General Assistance clients.

PAAD is the state's program that offers prescriptions to income-qualified adults over the age of 65 and people with disabilities. The program is funded through the Casino Revenue Fund and general appropriations. Prescriptions through the program require a \$5 co-payment.

The State Health Benefits Program provides health benefits to current and retired public employees, municipal workers, teachers and others. Prescriptions for name brand drugs obtained through the State Prescription Drug Plan require a \$5 co-payment.

Medicaid is the principal health care program for low-income families, elderly individuals, and people with disabilities. Prescriptions obtained through the program do not require a co-payment.

The General Assistance program is the welfare program for the very neediest individuals. Prescriptions obtained through the program do not require a co-payment.