



October 2020

Dear Member:

In 2006, Medicare's prescription drug plan became available to individuals enrolled in Medicare. As part of a Medicare requirement, SISC is sending this notice to let members know the Rx plan they are enrolled in is creditable coverage. Creditable coverage means your Rx plan on average will pay as much as or more than standard Medicare prescription drug coverage.

For 2021, the Rx plan you are enrolled in is considered creditable coverage. Please read the attached notice for more information. It is important that you read this notice carefully and keep it where you can find it. If you ever drop your SISC coverage and need to enroll in a Medicare prescription drug plan, you may be required to submit this notice so you will not have to pay a penalty for not enrolling in a Medicare prescription drug plan when you were first eligible.

Again, the Rx plan you are enrolled in is considered creditable coverage. For 2021, as long as you retain your SISC coverage, it is not necessary to enroll in a Medicare prescription drug plan through another insurance carrier. The two Rx plans will not coordinate benefits. Please read the attached notice for further details.

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*A Joint Powers Authority administered by the Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office, Mary C. Barlow, Superintendent*

## **CREDITABLE COVERAGE DISCLOSURE**

### **Important Notice From SISC About Your Prescription Drug Coverage and Medicare**

**Please read this notice carefully and keep this notice as your proof of creditable coverage.**

**No action is needed to keep your current SISC benefits in place.**

SISC has determined that the prescription drug coverage through your school district is creditable. This means that the amount the plan expects to pay on average for prescription drugs for individuals covered by the plan in 2021 is the same or more than what standard Medicare prescription drug coverage (Medicare D) would be expected to pay on average.

Creditable coverage is important. It means you can keep your benefits through the school district; and if you leave SISC and enroll in a Medicare prescription drug plan, you will not have to pay extra for Medicare Part D.

Medicare prescription drug coverage became available in 2006 to everyone with Medicare through Medicare prescription drug plans and Medicare Advantage plans that offer drug coverage. All Medicare prescription drug plans will provide at least a standard level of coverage set by Medicare. Some plans might also offer more coverage for a higher monthly premium.

**Because your existing coverage is, on average, as good as or better than standard Medicare prescription drug coverage, you can keep your existing coverage and not pay extra if you later decide to enroll in a Medicare prescription drug plan.**

Individuals can enroll in a Medicare prescription drug plan when they first become eligible for Medicare and each year from October 15<sup>th</sup> through December 7<sup>th</sup>. Unless you plan on dropping your existing SISC benefits, it would not be worthwhile to enroll in a Medicare prescription drug plan through another insurance carrier. The SISC plan and the Medicare prescription drug plan will not coordinate in any way.

**If you decide to enroll in a Medicare prescription drug plan and drop your SISC coverage, be aware that SISC coverage may not be available at a later date.**

You should also know that if you drop or lose your coverage with SISC and do not enroll in a Medicare prescription drug plan after your current coverage ends, you may pay more to enroll in a Medicare prescription drug plan later. If you go for 63 days or longer without prescription drug coverage that's at least as good as Medicare's prescription drug coverage, your monthly premium would be at least 1% higher per month for every month you did not have coverage. For example, if you go 19 months without creditable coverage, your Medicare prescription drug plan premium would always be at least 19% higher than what other people pay. You'd have to pay this higher premium as long as you have Medicare prescription drug coverage. In addition, you may have to wait until next October to enroll.

More detailed information about Medicare prescription drug plans is available in the *Medicare & You* handbook. You'll get a copy of the handbook in the mail from Medicare. You may also be contacted directly by Medicare-approved prescription drug plans. You can also get more information about Medicare prescription drug plans from these places:

- Call your State Health Insurance Assistance Program (see your copy of the *Medicare & You* handbook for their telephone number). Visit [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov) for personalized help.
- Call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.

For people with limited income and resources, extra help paying for a Medicare prescription drug plan is available. Information about this extra help is available from the Social Security Administration (SSA). For more information about this extra help, visit SSA online at [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov), or call them at 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778).