

THE TRUSTEE

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Fall Is Here

The fall season has arrived and with it comes warnings of increased levels of COVID. The CDC, health departments and immunologists are warning of increases in the spread as we head indoors and start the holiday season. Last year after Halloween, there was a large spike in the number of cases. The recommendation is for everyone including young children to be vaccinated and boosted. Getting the vaccine is a much easier than it was initially. Various vaccines are available through the Ulster County Health Department at the former Best Buy county site, at many drugstores (CVS, Walgreens, Nekos-Dedricks and others) and walk in health centers. You can go online or call the Ulster County Department of health or the individual stores for additional information. Additionally, it is recommended to get a Flu shot as well. Both shots can be given at the same time, but speak to your health care provider for guidance.

The KTF grievance regarding the district's responsibility to provide the inoculations for KTF members is ongoing and awaiting a decision.

COVID tests- If you are not Medicare eligible, you can purchase the test and submit the receipt for reimbursement. Medicare eligible people will have the test covered by Medicare.

Medicare reimbursement: the Kingston School district has a long practice of reimbursing Medicare eligible members for the monthly Medicare payments. This practice was negotiated and has been put into the most recent KTF contract. The contract, which is retroactive to July 1, 2021, provides for the reimburse of monthly Medicare payments and the Income Related Monthly Adjustment Amount (IRMAA). The district is creating district policy to protect this valuable benefit for all past retirees. The procedure for reimbursement is going to change because of recent NYS audit. In September, all Medicare eligible members received a letter from the district requesting proof of the amount paid for Medicare. This information is needed before the district can reimburse members. The information must be submitted by November 30, 2022 to get the reimbursement in December. If you need assistance getting a copy of your letter to verify the amount paid, you can go online at <https://secure.ssa.gov> , call the SSA national number 1-800-772-1213 between 8:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. or call the local office in your area. The Poughkeepsie number is 1-877-405-6747. The office is open from 9:00 am.until 4:00 p.m., Monday- Friday. Until the procedure for IRMAA is defined, members who are paying IRMAA should request the additional reimbursement in writing, from the district. More information will be coming on this topic.

As of January 1, 2023, we will be changing our mail order pharmacy. The process will be as seamless as possible. Members will be receiving more information in late November/ early December from **WithMe Health**, our new mail order pharmacy

manager. Prescriptions will transitioned and providers will be called if new scripts are needed. Members will receive new cards from **WithMe Health**. Only the mail order is changing, we will still be using **CANARX**.

Recent news articles serve as a reminder to all to check your EOBs and to verify that the charges are correct. Mobile Life Medical Transport was charged by the NYS Attorney Letitia James with *bill balancing*, for illegally billing patients in an attempt to collect additional charges from patients after the claims were adjudicated. The company threatened and sent some of these claims to collections. A settlement was reached. If you experience this, please let us know.

Lastly, a reminder regarding Long Term Care Insurance. The paper work for filing is on the Trust website. If you need to access your benefits, there is a ninety-day waiting period before it becomes effective, so it is important not to wait and to prepare the paperwork as soon as the need arises.