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bulletin

National Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Commission
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Paul A. Morin, Chairman - Massachusetts
Carol J. Rutherford, Director - Maryland

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Veterans Health Administration to Recoup Underpaid Copayments for Prescriptions Filled in 2002-2003

In February 2002 copayments for VA furnished prescriptions were increased from $2.00 to $7.00 per prescription or refill. Most VA medical dispensaries and pharmacies neglected to implement the increase for non-service connected medications. A computer program "patch" that would implement the change and bill the correct copayment amounts was never created or installed.

As a result, 46,988 veterans will be receiving back bills averaging $86.00 for a grand total of approximately $4,000,000.00. VA has decided to back bill patients to 2/4/02, the date of the increase in the copayment, effective with the next monthly statement mailing. For 2002 prescription refills, the new patch will prevent any veteran from being billed more than the 2002 copayment cap of $770 or $840 for 2003.

Medical Centers have been instructed to be flexible in assisting veterans with repayment plans and, assurances have been made that no deceased veterans will be back-billed.

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