

New Prescription Drug Program for Uninsured Launches National Bus Tour to Assist Patients Who Need Help Paying for Medicines

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WASHINGTON, D.C., May 4 – The Partnership for Prescription Assistance, a new national program to help patients in need get access to prescription medicines, today launched the “Help Is Here Express” bus tour. The bus tour kicks off during the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation’s Cover the Uninsured Week to inform millions of uninsured patients that they may qualify for assistance in paying for their prescription medicines.

Since the April 5 launch of the Partnership for Prescription Assistance, the program has helped more than 180,000 people match up with patient assistance programs that meet their needs.

“We are thrilled that patients are responding so strongly to the Partnership for Prescription Assistance,” said Billy Tauzin, president and CEO of the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA). “But we know that millions more could be helped, and that’s why we are taking the message on the road with the ‘Help Is Here Express’ – a traveling enrollment center.”

The bus will begin its journey today in Washington, D.C. at Unity Health Care in Upper Cardozo Center (3020 14th Street N.W.) where it will host its first of many patient enrollment drives. The bus will make a stop on Capitol Hill tomorrow before hitting the road. In the next few months, the “Help Is Here Express” will visit Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Rhode Island, Massachusetts and Florida and will then make its way across the country.

“We are excited that the ‘Help Is Here Express’ will make its debut at our largest health center in the city,” said Vincent A. Keane, CEO of Unity Health Care, Inc. “We wholeheartedly support programs that benefit patients who cannot afford their prescription drugs. The Partnership for Prescription Assistance, and this bus, will make it easier for patients to enroll.”

The bus is equipped with 10 computer terminals and six phones to make it easy for patients to enroll on site. Through the toll-free number (1-888-4PPA-NOW) and user-friendly Web site (www.pparx.org), the Partnership for Prescription Assistance is the only program that provides a single point of access to more than 275 public and private patient assistance programs, including more than 150 programs offered by pharmaceutical companies.

More than 50 national organizations, including the American Academy of Family Physicians, American Cancer Society, NAACP, National Alliance for Hispanic Health, National Urban League, United Way of America, as well as a fast-growing list of state and local organizations, are working with America’s pharmaceutical companies to spread the word about the program.

"The Partnership for Prescription Assistance's 'Help Is Here Express' vehicle provides the mobility to reach, inform and register at-risk patients in communities of color for benefits to help pay for life-saving medicines - enabling compliance and potentially offsetting the prevalence of disease disparities," said Gary A. Puckrein, Ph.D., executive director of the National Minority Health Month Foundation.

*To find out if they may qualify, patients should call toll-free **1-888-4PPA-NOW** (1-888-477-2669) to speak with a trained specialist or visit www.pparx.org.*