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## Erie County offers card aimed lowering drug costs

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Erie County is mailing cards for prescription discounts to thousands of residents in a program that could provide savings to those who lack health insurance.

Individuals who present the cards at a participating pharmacy can save an average of 35 percent on the cost of prescription drugs, according to County Executive Chris Collins, who announced the program Monday.

The card may also be used for some medications for pets. Most pharmacies in the Buffalo area will accept the cards, county officials said.

The card is aimed primarily at uninsured individuals. Those who have prescription coverage under a health plan can only use the cards for discounts on medications not covered by their insurance.

The program was initiated by ProAct Inc., the pharmacy benefit management division of Kinney Drugs. ProAct printed and is mailing the cards.

The program also includes discounts for vision care, LASIK surgery and hearing products for those who lack insurance for those services. More information is available at the ProAct Web site at

[www.proactrx.com](http://www.proactrx.com)

. "Participants will save an average of 10 [percent] to 20 percent on brand-name prescriptions and 50 [percent] to 70 percent on generic drugs," Social Services Commissioner Carol Dankert said in a statement.

Collins said there is no cost to the county for the program.

"This is a great opportunity to help families who do not have adequate benefits to receive affordable prescriptions," he said.

The cards were sent to what a county official described as a “targeted audience of tens of thousands” of residents. Cards also are available at pharmacies and some county agencies and can be printed from a computer by visiting

[www.nyrxdiscountcard.com](http://www.nyrxdiscountcard.com)

. Erie County joins other counties in the state using a prescription discount program, which was recommended in a 2008 report by County Comptroller Mark Poloncarz. The New York State Association of Counties endorsed the ProAct program several years ago, although there are competing programs in New York and other states.

Under such programs, pharmacists generally accept a lower amount in return for hoped-for additional sales from customers.

The National Association of Counties, for instance, maintains a national discount card program administered through Caremark, a subsidiary of CVS Caremark Corp., which also owns the national drugstore chain CVS.

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## Comments

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