



Type here to search...

- [HOME](#)
- [SCHOOL OF PHARMACY](#)
- [CONNECT WITH US](#)
- [CONTACT US](#)

HELPING HANDS: HELPING SENIORS PAY FOR THEIR MEDICATIONS



- April 24, 2020
- [Baltimore, Community, Faculty, Practice](#)
- [Charmaine Rochester-Eyeguokan, Community Pharmacy, Coronavirus, COVID-19, Diabetes, Helping Hands](#)
- -
 -
 -

Written By: Charmaine Rochester-Eyeguokan, PharmD, CDE, BCACP, Professor of Pharmacy Practice and Science

Editor's Note: *This post is part of a series of [Helping Hands](#) stories authored by School of Pharmacy faculty, staff, students, trainees, and alumni who stepped up to assist their family and friends, colleagues, and communities during the COVID-19 pandemic.*

Many of the patients at the Center for Diabetes and Endocrinology at the University of Maryland Midtown Campus are seniors with Medicare Part D, who are unable to afford high copays on diabetes medications, especially insulin, GLP-1 Receptor Agonists medications, and some oral diabetes medications. Patients are often referred to the pharmacist for assistance with medication access.

Sadly, referrals have quadrupled this year due to increased medication copays and high deductibles implemented at the beginning of the year for many seniors. The COVID-19 crisis has intensified the stress on patients, creating an additional burden that often forces them to choose between paying for food or medications.

In order to ensure that patients maintain adequate blood glucose control, I have used several methods to help patients through the crisis. I screen all referrals for program eligibility and then submit applications for patients to the drug manufacturer's patient assistance programs.

This year, and throughout the COVID-19 crisis, applications have been submitted and approved to provide more than 80 free medications from manufacturers to 55 patients. This requires constant telephone communication between the patient, pharmacist, manufacturer, dispensing pharmacy, and the delivery companies to ensure success. Referrals are still pouring in, and applications are being processed daily.

For those ineligible for manufacturer patient assistance programs, I submit applications through the clinic's Patient Assistance Through Caring and Helping (PATCH) fund that pays for the medications at the University of Maryland Midtown Pharmacy. It assists eligible patients in receiving temporary assistance toward a one-time payment of their diabetes medications and/or supplies, up to \$100. The funding comes from donations from caring patients, staff, and health care providers at the University of Maryland. Since the fund launched in 2018, it has provided 95 free medications to 61 patients.

The ultimate goal is to help each patient achieve great blood glucose control and maintain good health through the COVID-19 crisis and beyond.

[Helping Hands: Reaching Out to Residents at a Local Assisted Living Facility](#)

[Helping Hands: Lamy Center Continues Outreach to West Baltimore Community](#)

Leave a Reply