

# **HIV+HEP**

## POLICY INSTITUTE

### PRESS RELEASE

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## **TrumpRx Shakes Up Drug Pricing by Bypassing Middlemen** *Consumers Should Carefully Review Costs & Know Insurers Are Not Yet Participating*

WASHINGTON, D.C. — “President Trump should be congratulated for shaking up the drug pricing system by taking the bold step to launch [TrumpRx](#), a government website which allows consumers to purchase prescription medications at much lower costs by bypassing drug middlemen,” commented **Carl Schmid, executive director** of the [HIV+Hepatitis Policy Institute](#).

For uninsured people, [TrumpRx](#) provides them the opportunity to access lower cost drugs that for many have been out of reach until now. At the moment, there are 43 drugs available through the website with a prescription.

While people with private insurance and Medicare Part D may be attracted to the low costs of the drugs, beneficiaries must be aware that any medications bought through [TrumpRx](#) will not count towards their plan’s deductible or out-of-pocket maximum. Even if the drug’s monthly cost might be lower on the website, people should compare the cost on an annual basis. Many patients often meet their deductible early in the year, after which insurance covers the remaining costs.

Recently, 20 patient groups [sent a letter](#) to Dr. Mehmet Oz, the CMS Administrator, to request that these factors be made clear to [TrumpRx](#) users, which they are. We also urged the Trump administration to work with insurers to make sure that payments made through the site will count towards beneficiary cost-sharing obligations.

At a recent Congressional hearing, insurance executives were asked if they would be willing to work with [TrumpRx](#). While United Healthcare did not respond affirmatively, CVS Health, Cigna, Elevance and Ascendium (parent of Blue Shield of California) each expressed willingness. Just yesterday, the FTC announced a [draft settlement agreement](#) with Express Scripts (owned by

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Cigna) that they have agreed to work with TrumpRx and eventually apply patient costs towards deductibles and other out-of-pocket costs.

“Today marks a monumental step in transforming drug pricing and making prescription drugs more affordable for the American people, particularly for those without insurance,” continued **Schmid**. “For those who do have insurance, TrumpRx may not always be the best option. We hope consumers clearly understand this and urge the Trump administration to expand the site and work with insurers so that TrumpRx payments are counted by insurers. Frankly, if people who have health insurance are using TrumpRx, it demonstrates that the insurer is failing to meet the needs of its paying-consumers,” he concluded.

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The **HIV+Hepatitis Policy Institute** is a national, non-profit organization whose mission is to promote quality and affordable healthcare for people living with or at risk of HIV, hepatitis, and other serious and chronic health conditions.