

## NEWS RELEASE

## AMERICAN PSYCHIATRIC ASSOCIATION

1000 WILSON BOULEVARD, SUITE 1825, ARLINGTON, VA 22209



### **For Information Contact:**

Eve Herold, 703-907-8640

[press@psych.org](mailto:press@psych.org)

Jaime Valora, 703-907-8562

[jvalora@psych.org](mailto:jvalora@psych.org)

### **For Immediate Release**

June 25, 2009

Release No. 09-40

### **American Psychiatric Association Endorses Commitment To Closing the Medicare “Doughnut Hole”**

**ARLINGTON, Va.** (June 25, 2009) — The American Psychiatric Association (APA) commended the Senate Finance Committee, the Obama administration and the nation’s pharmaceutical companies today for addressing the Medicare coverage gap in prescription drug plans for America’s seniors.

The coverage gap, known as the Medicare “doughnut hole,” excludes coverage for the annual costs of prescription medications that exceed \$2,700 but don’t reach \$6,154, a gap that APA president Alan Schatzberg called “an excessive burden to those over 65 and those who are chronically disabled, including those suffering from mental illnesses.”

Under the new agreement on the part of Congress and PhRMA, the largest organization representing the pharmaceutical industry, drug companies will provide \$80 billion to cover up to 50 percent of the cost of brand-name medications that fall through the gap in Medicare’s Part D prescription program. The agreement is being discussed as part of the major health care reform legislation being considered by Congress.

“Although this is a first step, it is a step in the direction of providing high-quality, affordable health care to all Americans,” Dr. Schatzberg said. “The APA recognizes that full prescription coverage is an integral part of any meaningful health care reform and applauds the effort to eliminate one of the most glaring deficiencies in Medicare.”

“We hope to see this agreement take effect as part of a package that includes the comprehensive and universal health care coverage that the American people need and deserve,” Dr. Schatzberg said.

The **American Psychiatric Association** is a national medical specialty society whose more than 38,000 physician members specialize in diagnosis, treatment, prevention and research of mental illnesses including substance use disorders. Visit the APA at [www.psych.org](http://www.psych.org) and [www.HealthyMinds.org](http://www.HealthyMinds.org).

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