
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO THE STATE PHARMACY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. Prescription drugs have become an increasingly
2 important part of health care, especially among older adults.
3 Prescription drugs have also become the most expensive component
4 of health care, accounting for approximately two-thirds of
5 health care costs.

6 In 2002, the legislature adopted the Hawaii Rx program,
7 intended to help a large population of Hawaii residents better
8 afford their prescription drugs through a discount program,
9 thereby increasing the overall health of Hawaii residents,
10 promoting healthy communities, and protecting public health and
11 welfare. In 2004, the program was amended to become the Hawaii
12 Rx plus program. Implemented in July 2005, Hawaii Rx plus has
13 enabled thousands of Hawaii residents, regardless of age, to
14 take advantage of discounted prices for their prescription drug
15 needs when no other insurance or payor are available to them.

16 In 2005, in anticipation of the new Medicare Modernization
17 Act's Part D program which took effect on January 1, 2006, the
18 state medicare part D state pharmacy assistance program was



1 created. The state medicare part D program covers the co-
2 payments for medicare and medicaid dual eligible clients to
3 ensure a smooth transition of prescription drug coverage from
4 medicaid to medicare.

5 The federal Medicare Modernization Act of 2005 also
6 provides special relief for qualified state pharmacy assistance
7 programs. Both the Hawaii Rx plus program and the state
8 medicare part D program are recognizable under federal law as
9 state pharmacy assistance programs and, if they are combined
10 under an umbrella program and approved as a single federally
11 recognized program, could receive enhanced benefits from the
12 federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

13 This Act would consolidate the provisions of both the
14 Hawaii Rx plus program and the state medicare part D program
15 into a single state pharmacy assistance program for which the
16 State could then seek approval from the federal Centers for
17 Medicare and Medicaid Services to recognize this newly
18 consolidated program as a federally qualified state pharmacy
19 assistance program to receive enhanced benefits.

20 Through this consolidation, the state medicare part D
21 program would remain the same and its enrollees would be
22 identified as "tier one enrollees" and the Hawaii Rx plus



1 program would remain the same and its enrollees would be
2 identified as "tier two enrollees." In addition, this Act would
3 provide prescription drug assistance for a subset of the Hawaii
4 Rx plus population, identified as the "tier three enrollees",
5 who may be at risk of becoming medicaid eligible and for whom
6 the State will seek approval from the federal Centers for
7 Medicare and Medicaid Services to allow the mandating of rebates
8 from drug manufacturers resulting in greater discounts.

9 The State of Hawaii will continue to receive pharmacy
10 discounts for individuals in the Hawaii Rx plus program with
11 incomes up to three hundred fifty per cent of the federal
12 poverty level. With federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid
13 Services approval, the State will also be able to begin
14 mandating rebates from pharmaceutical companies for prescription
15 drugs purchased by individuals in the Hawaii Rx plus program who
16 are at risk of qualifying for medicaid with incomes equal to or
17 less than three hundred per cent of the federal poverty level as
18 approved by the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid
19 Services.

20 The State of Hawaii may also be able to combine the
21 purchasing power of these two programs to negotiate larger
22 discounts, similar to federal government and private health



1 insurers, as approved by the federal Centers for Medicare and
2 Medicaid Services. Finally, combining both programs into a
3 federally qualified state pharmacy assistance program
4 streamlines operations and promotes effective administration.

5 The federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services is
6 requiring a state statute before it will consider a request for
7 approval of the income eligibility for the medicaid at-risk
8 population and set the percentage of state contribution that
9 will be required toward the cost of prescription drugs for the
10 at-risk population, which will allow the mandating of rebates
11 for this group.

12 This Act, to be known as the "Hawaii Prescription Drug
13 Affordability Act of 2007", seeks to further drive down the cost
14 of prescription drugs for Hawaii's uninsured, underinsured, low-
15 income, elderly, and disabled residents.

16 SECTION 2. Chapter 346, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
17 amended by adding four new sections to be appropriately
18 designated and to read as follows:

19 "§346- Program goals. The legislature finds that
20 affordability is critical in providing Hawaii residents with
21 access to prescription drugs. This section is enacted by the
22 legislature to enable the State to make prescription drugs more



1 affordable for qualified Hawaii residents and thereby increase
2 the overall health of Hawaii residents, promote healthy
3 communities, and protect the public health and welfare. The
4 legislature also intends that the program be integrated as much
5 as possible with other state health programs. It is not the
6 intention of the legislature for this law to discourage
7 employers from offering to pay, or from paying for prescription
8 drug benefits for their employees, or to supplant employer-
9 sponsored prescription drug benefit plans.

10 "§346- Hawaii Rx plus preferred drug list. (a) All
11 drugs shall be available at the medicaid discount price, or
12 less. The Hawaii Rx plus preferred drug list shall offer an
13 additional "secondary discount price," or less, on preferred
14 drugs, to be reimbursed through the Hawaii state pharmacy
15 assistance program special fund.

16 (b) The department shall establish secondary discounts for
17 drugs covered by a rebate agreement and shall promote the use of
18 safe, efficacious, and cost-effective drugs, taking into
19 consideration:

20 (1) Reduced prices for state and federally capped drug
21 programs;

22 (2) Differential dispensing fees;



- 1 (3) Administrative costs of the department; and
- 2 (4) The recommendation of the pharmacy and therapeutic
- 3 committee.
- 4 (c) The department shall establish a Hawaii Rx plus
- 5 preferred drug list that includes but is not limited to:
- 6 (1) Drugs listed on the State's medicaid preferred drug
- 7 list;
- 8 (2) Any other drugs listed on the Hawaii Rx plus preferred
- 9 drug list pursuant to this section; and
- 10 (3) Generic drugs that are priced, using a maximum
- 11 allowable cost list, as determined by the department.
- 12 (d) The pharmacy and therapeutic committee shall review
- 13 and recommend drugs for placement on the Hawaii Rx plus
- 14 preferred drug list, striving to identify the safest and most
- 15 efficacious drugs that are available at the lowest cost. The
- 16 committee's recommendations may take into consideration any of
- 17 the following factors:
- 18 (1) Therapeutic value for the disease or condition under
- 19 treatment;
- 20 (2) Clinical efficacy;
- 21 (3) Safety;
- 22 (4) Cost; and



1 (5) Other relevant factors as determined by the committee.

2 (e) When considering categories of drugs designed to treat
3 specialized chronic medical conditions and diseases, the
4 committee shall consult with physicians and other health care
5 professionals with specialized clinical knowledge and expertise
6 in this area, either in their capacity as consultants serving on
7 a subcommittee of the committee, or as physicians or pharmacists
8 with a practice or specialty in chronic diseases.

9 (f) The determination of a drug's safety and efficacy
10 shall be consistent with the standards set forth in the peer-
11 reviewed literature and other available sources, including but
12 not limited to:

13 (1) The American Hospital Formulary Service Drug
14 Information;

15 (2) The United States Pharmacopoeia Drug Information;

16 (3) The DRUGDEX System; and

17 (4) The American Medical Association Drug Evaluations.

18 (g) The determination of a drug's net cost shall consider
19 the pharmacy reimbursement amount authorized under section
20 346- , as adjusted by manufacturer's rebates to be paid to the
21 department. The committee shall determine that a drug has no
22 significant clinical or safety advantages over one or more



1 alternative drugs when used for a given purpose before it may
2 consider the drug's net cost.

3 "§346- Participating and nonparticipating manufacturers
4 and labelers. (a) The names of manufacturers that enter and do
5 not enter into rebate agreements pursuant to this part shall be
6 deemed public information. The department shall release this
7 information to health care providers and the public.

8 (b) The department or administrator may also provide to
9 health care providers information about the relative cost of
10 drugs produced by manufacturers that enter into rebate
11 agreements compared to the cost of drugs produced by those that
12 do not enter into rebate agreements, as allowed by law.

13 "§346- Pharmacy reimbursement. (a) A pharmacy shall
14 submit claims to the department to verify the amount charged to
15 tier two and tier three program participants. On a schedule to
16 be determined by the department, the department shall reimburse
17 each pharmacy for the discounts of prescription drugs provided
18 to program participants.

19 (b) The department shall collect pharmacy use data
20 necessary to calculate the amount of the manufacturer rebate
21 under section 346- . The department shall protect the



1 confidentiality of information received as required under state
2 or federal law, rule, or regulation.

3 (c) The department shall not impose transaction charges on
4 participating pharmacies that submit claims or receive payments
5 under the program."

6 SECTION 6. Chapter 346, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
7 amended by amending the title of part XV to read as follows:

8 "[+]PART XV.[+] HAWAII STATE PHARMACY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM"

9 SECTION 7. Chapter 346-341, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
10 amended as follows:

11 1. By adding fourteen new definitions to be appropriately
12 inserted and to read:

13 "Administrator" means the director of human services.

14 "Discount" means the amount by which the price of a drug
15 sold by a pharmacy is reduced as determined by the department of
16 human services.

17 "Hawaii Rx plus program" means the prescription drug
18 discount program that provides discounts to qualified Hawaii
19 residents who are uninsured or underinsured through manufacturer
20 rebates and pharmacy discounts.

21 "Hawaii state pharmacy assistance program" means the
22 program that covers the co-payments for eligible seniors and



1 disabled individuals under the medicare part D drug benefit and
2 the prescription drug discounts for the Hawaii Rx plus program.

3 "Initial discount price" as it pertains to a drug means the
4 price that the department pays medicaid participating pharmacies
5 to purchase the drug for its medicaid members.

6 "Manufacturer" means anyone who is engaged in
7 manufacturing, preparing, propagating, compounding, processing,
8 packaging, repackaging, or labeling a prescription drug.

9 "Participating pharmacy" or "retail pharmacy" means a
10 retail pharmacy located in this state, or another business
11 licensed to dispense prescription drugs in this State, that
12 elects to participate in the program.

13 "Pharmacy and therapeutic committee" means the committee
14 established by the department that advises the state medicaid
15 director on the Hawaii Rx plus preferred drug list.

16 "Preferred drug" includes but is not limited to:

17 (1) A drug listed on the State's medicaid preferred drug
18 list;

19 (2) An antipsychotic drug;

20 (3) An antidepressant drug;

21 (4) A chemotherapy drug;

22 (5) An antiretroviral drug;



- 1 (6) An immunosuppressive drug; and
2 (7) Any other drug listed on the Hawaii Rx plus preferred
3 drug list pursuant to this part.

4 "Secondary discount price" as it pertains to a drug means
5 the initial discount price less any further discounts paid out
6 of the Hawaii state pharmacy assistance program special fund.

7 "State medicare part D program" means the medicare part D
8 state pharmacy assistance program that provides co-payments for
9 qualified Hawaii residents."

10 "Tier one enrollee" means a beneficiary who qualifies for
11 the medicare part D state pharmacy assistance program.

12 "Tier two enrollee" means a beneficiary who qualifies for
13 the Hawaii Rx plus program and whose household income is equal
14 to or less than three hundred and fifty per cent of the federal
15 poverty level.

16 "Tier three enrollee" means a beneficiary who qualifies for
17 the Hawaii Rx plus program and whose household income is equal
18 to or less than three hundred per cent of the federal poverty
19 level as approved by the federal Centers for Medicare and
20 Medicaid Services."

21 2. By amending the definitions of "asset test",
22 "contractor", and "enrollee" to read:



1 "Asset test" means the asset limits for eligibility in the
2 ~~[state pharmacy assistance program]~~ state medicare part D
3 program as defined by the Medicare Modernization Act and any
4 amendments thereto.

5 "Contractor means the person, partnership, or corporate
6 entity that has an approved contract with the department to
7 administer the Hawaii state pharmacy assistance program as
8 established under this part.

9 "Enrollee" means a resident of this State who meets the
10 conditions specified in this part and in departmental rules
11 relating to eligibility for participating in the Hawaii state
12 pharmacy assistance program and whose application for enrollment
13 in the Hawaii state pharmacy assistance program has been
14 approved by the department."

15 SECTION 8. Section 346-342, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
16 amended to read as follows:

17 "~~+~~§346-342~~+~~ **State pharmacy assistance program.** (a)
18 There is established within the department the Hawaii state
19 pharmacy assistance program~~[-]~~, which shall provide benefits for
20 enrollees in the state medicare part D program and the Hawaii Rx
21 plus program. Provided that there are no federally approved
22 prescription drug plans available in the state that provide a



1 full coverage prescription drug benefit, the [~~state pharmacy~~
2 ~~assistance program~~] state medicare part D program may coordinate
3 the prescription drug coverage with [~~the~~] any benchmark federal
4 medicare part D prescription drug plan benefit, including
5 related supplies, as determined by the department, to each
6 resident who meets the eligibility requirements as outlined in
7 section 346-343. The Hawaii Rx plus program shall combine the
8 purchasing power of all qualified residents to enable the State
9 to reduce prescription drug costs, as approved by the federal
10 Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, and further improve
11 the quality of healthcare for qualified Hawaii residents in the
12 program, thereby increasing the overall health of Hawaii
13 residents, promoting healthy communities, and protecting the
14 public health and welfare.

15 (b) The department may provide enrollment assistance to
16 eligible individuals into the [~~state pharmacy assistance~~
17 ~~program.~~] state medicare part D program. Enrollment for
18 medicaid dual eligible persons shall begin no later than October
19 1, 2005.

20 (c) [~~The~~] For the state medicare part D program, the
21 department shall allow any willing benchmark prescription drug
22 plan approved by the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid



1 Services to provide the coordination of benefits between the
2 [~~State's medicare prescription drug program~~] state medicare part
3 D program and the federal medicare part D drug benefit.

4 (d) The department may administer the state pharmacy
5 assistance program or contract with a third party or parties in
6 accordance with chapter 103F to administer any single component
7 or combination of components of the state pharmacy assistance
8 program, including outreach, eligibility, enrollment, claims,
9 administration, rebate negotiations and recovery, and
10 redistribution, [~~in order~~] to coordinate the prescription drug
11 benefits of the state pharmacy assistance program and the
12 federal medicare part D drug benefit.

13 (e) Any contract with third parties to administer any
14 component of the state pharmacy assistance program shall be
15 established either at no cost to the State, or on a
16 contingency-fee basis and with no up-front costs to the State,
17 as may be negotiated by the department.

18 (f) Any contract with third parties to administer any
19 component of the state pharmacy assistance program shall
20 prohibit the contractor from receiving any compensation or other
21 benefits from any pharmaceutical manufacturer participating in
22 the state pharmacy assistance program.



1 (g) A prescription drug manufacturer or labeler that sells
2 prescription drugs in the [~~State~~] state may enter into a rebate
3 agreement with the department. The rebate agreement may be
4 agreed upon by the manufacturer or the labeler to make rebate
5 payments to the department each calendar quarter or according to
6 a schedule established by the department.

7 (h) The department or contractor may negotiate the amount
8 of the rebate required from a manufacturer or labeler in
9 accordance with this part.

10 (i) The department or contractor [~~may~~] shall take into
11 consideration the rebate calculated under the medicaid rebate
12 program pursuant to title 42 United States Code Section 1396r-8,
13 the average [~~wholesale~~] manufacturer price of prescription
14 drugs, and any other cost data related to prescription drug
15 prices and price discounts.

16 (j) The department or contractor shall use their best
17 efforts to obtain the best possible rebate amount.

18 (k) The department may prescribe the application and
19 enrollment procedures for prospective enrollees.

20 (l) The department shall conduct ongoing quality assurance
21 activities similar to those used in the State's medicaid
22 program.



1 (m) The department shall take all steps necessary to
2 enable participation in joint prescription drug purchasing
3 agreements with any other health benefits plan or organization
4 within or outside of this state that agrees to participate in a
5 joint purchasing agreement. The director shall:

6 (1) Execute any joint purchasing agreements or other
7 contracts with any participating health benefits plan
8 or organization within or outside the state that the
9 department determines will lower the cost of
10 prescription drugs for the residents of this state
11 while maintaining high quality in prescription drug
12 therapies;

13 (2) With regard to participation by a health benefits plan
14 established by the board of trustees of the Hawaii
15 employer-union health benefits trust fund, execute any
16 joint purchasing agreements or other contracts with
17 any health benefits plan or organization within or
18 outside the state the department determines will lower
19 the cost of prescription drugs and provide overall
20 quality of integrated health care services to that
21 health benefits plan and the beneficiaries of the
22 plan, and that is negotiated through the collective



- 1 bargaining process between the State and the
2 authorized representatives of the employees of the
3 State;
- 4 (3) Renegotiate and amend existing contracts to which the
5 department is a party if renegotiations and amendment
6 will be of economic benefit to the health benefits
7 plan subject to those contracts and to the
8 beneficiaries of those plans. Any renegotiation or
9 substituted contract shall be designed to improve the
10 overall quality of integrated health care services
11 provided to the beneficiaries of those plans; and
- 12 (4) Report annually to the governor and the legislature on
13 progress in securing Hawaii's participation in joint
14 purchasing agreements."

15 SECTION 9. Section 346-343, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
16 amended to read as follows:

17 "**§346-343 Eligibility.** (a) All residents of the [State]
18 state shall be eligible to participate in the Hawaii state
19 pharmacy assistance program; provided that the applicant[+]
20 meets the following eligibility requirements:

21 (1) Tier one enrollee:

22 [~~(1)~~] (A) Is a resident of Hawaii;



1 (3) Tier three enrollee:

2 (A) Is a resident of the State of Hawaii;

3 (B) Has a family income equal to or less than three
4 hundred per cent of the federal poverty level, as
5 approved by the federal Centers for Medicare and
6 Medicaid Services;

7 (C) Lacks prescription drug coverage or has exceeded
8 the extent of the resident's prescription drug
9 benefits; and

10 (D) Is enrolled in the program.

11 (b) [~~State pharmacy assistance~~] Tier one program
12 applicants who are enrolled in any other public assistance
13 program providing pharmaceutical benefits, other than the
14 Medicare Modernization Act and medicaid, shall be ineligible for
15 the [~~state pharmacy assistance~~] state medicare part D program as
16 long as they receive pharmaceutical benefits from that other
17 public assistance program, unless the applicant is eligible for
18 medicare. Residents who qualify for, or are enrolled in, the
19 Hawaii Rx plus program shall be eligible for the [~~state pharmacy~~
20 ~~assistance~~] state medicare part D program; provided that they
21 meet all other [~~state pharmacy assistance~~] state medicare part D
22 program requirements.



1 (c) [~~State pharmacy assistance program applicants~~]
2 Applicants who are enrolled in a private sector plan or
3 insurance providing payments for prescription drugs shall be
4 ineligible to receive benefits from the [~~state pharmacy~~
5 ~~assistance~~] state medicare part D program.

6 (d) The department:

- 7 (1) Shall establish procedures to determine eligibility
8 and shall issue program enrollment cards to eligible
9 qualified residents;
- 10 (2) Shall provide for outreach efforts to build public
11 awareness of the program and maximize the enrollment
12 of eligible qualified residents; and
- 13 (3) May adjust the requirements and terms of the program
14 by rule to accommodate any federally funded or
15 authorized prescription drug program."

16 SECTION 10. Section 346-344, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
17 amended to read as follows:

18 "**§346-344 Benefits.** (a) For persons meeting the tier one
19 eligibility requirements in section 346-343, the Hawaii state
20 pharmacy assistance program may pay all or some of the co-
21 payments required under the federal medicare part D pharmacy
22 benefit program, subject to the sufficiency of funds in the



1 Hawaii state pharmacy assistance program special fund, as
2 determined by the department.

3 (b) [~~The state pharmacy assistance program~~] For tier one
4 enrollees, the state medicare part D program is the payor of
5 last resort subject to the sufficiency of funds in the Hawaii
6 state pharmacy assistance program special fund, as determined by
7 the department.

8 (c) The [~~state pharmacy assistance program~~] benefits for
9 tier one enrollees shall be funded with state appropriations,
10 including funds derived from revenues to the State from rebates
11 paid by pharmaceutical manufacturers pursuant to section 346-
12 342(g), and with savings resulting from medicare prescription
13 drug coverage for the medicaid dual eligible population.

14 (d) For tier two and tier three enrollees, each retail
15 pharmacy participating in the Hawaii Rx plus program shall sell
16 drugs to qualified residents at the initial discount price, as
17 determined by the department pursuant to this part.

18 (e) Beginning July 1, 2004, a participating pharmacy shall
19 offer the initial discount price.

20 (f) No later than July 1, 2008, a participating pharmacy
21 shall offer the secondary discount price to tier three
22 enrollees, if available.



1 (g) The benefits for tier two and tier three enrollees
2 shall be funded with state appropriations, including funds, as
3 approved by the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid
4 Services, derived from revenues to the State from rebates paid
5 by pharmaceutical manufacturers pursuant to Title 42 United
6 States Code Section 1396r-8 and to section 346-342(g)."

7 SECTION 11. Section 346-345, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
8 amended to read as follows:

9 "~~§~~**§346-345**~~§~~ **Special fund.** (a) There is established
10 within the state treasury to be administered by the department,
11 the Hawaii state pharmacy assistance program special fund, into
12 which shall be deposited:

- 13 (1) All moneys received from manufacturers that pay
14 rebates as provided in section 346-342(g);
15 (2) Appropriations made by the legislature to the fund;
16 and
17 (3) ~~any~~ Any other revenues designated for the fund.

18 (b) Moneys in the Hawaii state pharmacy assistance program
19 special fund may be used for:

- 20 (1) Reimbursement payments to participating pharmacies for
21 co-payments required under the federal medicare part D
22 pharmacy benefit program as provided to ~~state~~



1 ~~pharmacy assistance program participants]~~ tier one
2 enrollees;

3 (2) Reimbursement payments to participating pharmacies for
4 discounts provided to tier two and tier three
5 enrollees;

6 ~~[(2)]~~ (3) The costs of administering the Hawaii state pharmacy
7 assistance program, including salary and benefits of
8 employees, computer costs, and contracted services as
9 provided in section 346-342(d); and

10 ~~[(3)]~~ (4) Any other purpose deemed necessary by the department
11 for the purpose of operating and administering the
12 Hawaii state pharmacy assistance program.

13 All interest on special fund balances shall accrue to the
14 special fund. Upon dissolution of the Hawaii state pharmacy
15 assistance program special fund, any unencumbered moneys in the
16 fund shall lapse to the general fund.

17 (c) The department shall expend all ~~[revenues]~~ moneys
18 received from rebates paid by pharmaceutical manufacturers
19 pursuant to section 346-342(g) to pay for the benefits to
20 enrollees in the Hawaii state pharmacy assistance program
21 special fund to pay for the benefits to enrollees in the Hawaii
22 state pharmacy assistance program, the costs of administering



1 the program, and reimbursement of medicaid pharmaceutical
2 costs[-]; provided that any mandatory rebate revenues shall not
3 be used for administrative program costs, and general funds
4 shall be used to pay for a percentage of the secondary discount
5 price unless otherwise approved by the federal Centers for
6 Medicare and Medicaid Services."

7 SECTION 12. Part XIII of Chapter 346, Hawaii Revised
8 Statutes, is repealed.

9 SECTION 13. The department shall conduct a study to gather
10 information on the size of the target population, utilization
11 data, and other information as needed for the department to
12 identify the amount of the appropriation needed to implement the
13 secondary discount price and other costs of the program.

14 SECTION 14. There is appropriated out of the general
15 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so much
16 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2007-2008 to be paid
17 into the Hawaii state pharmacy assistance program special fund.

18 There is appropriated out of the Hawaii state pharmacy
19 assistance program special fund the sum of \$ or so much
20 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2007-2008 to the
21 department of human services for the purposes of conducting the
22 study mandated in section 13 of this Act.



1 The sum appropriated by this Act shall be expended by the
2 department of human services for the purposes of conducting the
3 study mandated in Section 14 of this Act.

4 SECTION 15. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed
5 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

6 SECTION 16. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2020,
7 except for section 14 and section 15 which shall take effect on
8 July 1, 2020.



Report Title:

State Pharmacy Assistance Program.

Description:

Creates a Hawaii State Pharmacy Assistance program by merging the current State Pharmacy Assistance program which coordinates the Medicare Part D drug benefit and the Hawaii Rx plus program under a single comprehensive Hawaii State Pharmacy Assistance program umbrella. Requires the Department of Human Services to take all steps necessary to enable participation in joint prescription drug purchasing agreements with any other health benefits plan or organization within or outside of this state that agrees to participate in a joint purchasing agreement.

(HB1359 HD1)

