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**UCare pilots in-home medication assessment program
to help seniors manage medications, improve health**

***Better health, and fewer hospitalizations and emergency
department visits are goals for UCare members of
Minnesota Senior Care Plus in
Anoka, Hennepin, and Ramsey counties***

MINNEAPOLIS, May 2, 2011 – A unique, in-home medication assessment pilot program has been developed by [UCare](#) in partnership with the [Minnesota Visiting Nurse Agency \(MVNA\)](#) for eligible UCare members of the [Minnesota Senior Care Plus \(MSC Plus\)](#) program.

[Studies](#) have found that patients receiving face-to-face medication therapy management services provided by pharmacists working with providers experience improved clinical outcomes and lower total health expenditures.* By offering an in-home review of medications by a licensed pharmacist with the MVNA, the pilot program seeks to decrease hospitalizations and emergency department visits, and encourage adherence to recommended refills for prescribed medications for participating members. The pilot program will serve eligible members in Anoka, Hennepin, and Ramsey counties, and is offered by UCare at no cost to the member.

UCare, Minnesota's fourth largest health plan, says an MVNA pharmacist will identify and contact eligible UCare members of MSC Plus who take eight (8) or more medications (e.g., prescriptions, herbal remedies, and/or over-the-counter medicines). During the pharmacist's visit to the member's home, he or she will determine the member's compliance with prescribed medication and doses, identify potential drug interactions, and promote the use of generic medications where possible. The pharmacist also will advise members about the therapeutic value, content, hazards, and proper use and storage of medications and medical devices. The pharmacist then will prepare and send a report of the visit and findings to the member's primary health care provider.

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“This is an exciting outreach effort that can make a measureable difference in the health of many of our Minnesota Senior Care Plus members,” says Jeri Peters, Clinical Services Director, UCare. “The pharmacist will offer immediate feedback and direction about medications to our members, many of whom are older and have more than one health condition. These members especially value the presence of a medical professional who can listen to them and understand their needs.”

MSC Plus is a health care program that pays for medical services for low-income people in Minnesota who are age 65 or older. It offers coverage for physician services, hospital stays, rehabilitation services, preventive care, and prescription drugs. Some MSC Plus members qualify for Elderly Waiver services, home and community-based services, and case management. UCare partners with the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) to offer MSC Plus in 57 counties in Minnesota.

About UCare

UCare (www.ucare.org) is an independent, nonprofit health plan providing health care and administrative services to more than 225,000 members. UCare partners with health care providers, counties, and community organizations to create and deliver innovative health coverage products for:

- Individuals and families enrolled in income-based Minnesota Health Care Programs, such as MinnesotaCare and Prepaid Medical Assistance Program.
- Adults with disabilities and Medicare beneficiaries with chronic health conditions.
- Minnesotans dually eligible for Medical Assistance and Medicare.
- Medicare-eligible individuals throughout Minnesota and in western Wisconsin.

UCare addresses health care disparities and care access issues through its UCare Fund grants and a broad array of community initiatives. The health plan received a Top Workplaces 2010 honor from the *Star Tribune*.

About Minnesota Visiting Nurse Agency

Founded in 1902, MVNA is a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization providing home health care and community health services in the Twin Cities metro area. MVNA serves economically disadvantaged individuals and families at high risk for critical social and health issues. More than 90% of MVNA clients residing in Minneapolis live at or below 200% of Federal Poverty Guidelines.

*“[Clinical and economic outcomes of medication therapy management services: the Minnesota experience](#),” *Journal of the American Pharmacists Association*, 2008 Mar-Apr; 48(2).