



**NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE**
Ashwin Vasani, MD, PhD
Commissioner

CY 2022: BigAppleRx – New York City's official Prescription Discount Card program

BigAppleRx Background

Established by City Council legislation, the BigAppleRx card is a free Pharmacy Discount Card available to everyone living, working, or visiting the City, regardless of age, income, citizenship, or health insurance status. Since its debut in May 2011, BigAppleRx has saved New Yorkers over \$60 million as compared to retail prices of medications purchased, a reported overall savings of 41 percent, based on data reported by the Pharmacy Benefit Manager (PBM) for the BigAppleRx program. New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) is responsible for managing this program.

The BigAppleRx card ("the Card") provides discounts for a broad range of brand-name and generic medications including over-the-counter medications such as smoking cessation aids and diabetic supplies. No personal information or enrollment is required to use the Card. The Card is accepted at more than 2,000 NYC pharmacies, including all the major chains and nearly all independent pharmacies. The Card can also be used outside of NYC at nearly 60,000 pharmacies nationwide. The Card is available at BigAppleRx.com along with drug prices and participating pharmacies. The program has a customer services helpline that can be accessed by calling 311.

Originally a standalone program, the BigAppleRx card was added to the City's IDNYC program in January 2015 (operated by NYC Human Resources Administration). Currently, over 1.5 million IDNYC cards have been issued by the City with the BigAppleRx program benefit embedded on the card.

Outreach

The PBM continued its efforts to promote BigAppleRx including ongoing support of IDNYC usage, webpage and fulfillment of English and Spanish card requests.

Since the introduction of BigAppleRx in 2011, the Affordable Care Act also expanded eligibility for Medicaid and created the New York State of Health Marketplace in 2013 where people can shop for low or no-cost health insurance. As a result, many more New Yorkers have health insurance coverage, which often comes with prescription drug benefits. For this reason, usage of the BigAppleRx card has declined in recent years. DOHMH continues to work with the PBM to promote the BigAppleRx card for those who remain uninsured, underinsured or without prescription drug coverage.

BigAppleRx Concession Agreement

The existing concession agreement extension has been changed from 18 months (June 30, 2023) to 30 months (ending on 6/30/2024).

Usage Statistics

The top 10 drugs filled through BigAppleRx as of the end of December 2022 are:



| Drug Label Name | Therapeutic Class |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. ASPIRIN TAB 81MG EC | Salicylates |
| 2. FERROUS SULF TAB 325MG | Iron preparations |
| 3. HYDROCHLOROT TAB 25MG | Thiazide Diuretics |
| 4. AMOXICILLIN CAP 500MG | Aminopenicillins |
| 5. FOLIC ACID TAB 1MG | Vitamin B complex |
| 6. AZITHROMYCIN TAB 250MG | Other Macrolides |
| 7. VITAMIN D CAP 50000UNT | Vitamin D |
| 8. AMLODIPINE TAB 5MG | Dihydropyridines |
| 9. AMLODIPINE TAB 10MG | Dihydropyridines |
| 10. ZOLPIDEM TAB 10MG | Anxiolytics, Sedatives, and Hypnoti |

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| First Time Users | 7,183 |
| Total Claims | 49,710 |
| Claims using BigAppleRx | 43,456 |
| Usual & Customary Rxs | 6,224 |
| Usual & Customary Amount | \$ 3,204,094 |
| Total User Paid Amount | \$ 1,699,390 |
| Estimated Savings | \$ 1,504,702 |
| User Savings % | 47% |

From May 2011 (program start) through December 31, 2022:

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|---|------------------|
| Estimated Total Savings by BigAppleRx Cardholders | \$ 60,859,843.92 |
| Total Claims Filled | 2,090,342 |
| Claims Filled using BigAppleRx | 1,779,086 |
| Overall Savings compared to Retail Price | 41% |
| Average Savings on Generic Prescriptions | 53% |
| Average Savings on Name Brand Prescriptions | 18% |

NYC DOHMH does not have independent access to the data for analysis. The stated savings of over \$60 million is in comparison to retail prices as reported by the PBM.