

GTPDD

News: 662-418-1174

Facebook: @GTrianglePDD

Contact: Aspen Harris

[AspenH@GTPDD.com](mailto:AspenH@GTPDD.com)

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## **Stay Home and Stay Healthy with the GTPDD Pharmacy**

STARKVILLE, Miss.—For many people living in rural Mississippi—especially the elderly and disabled—receiving the prescription medications needed to stay healthy and manage medical conditions is a challenge. In October 2013, the Golden Triangle Planning and Development District faced this challenge head-on with the opening of a closed-door pharmacy that delivers prepackaged, labeled prescription medications to the homes of residents in their seven-county district.

Before the pharmacy’s opening in 2013, the GTPDD recognized the challenge of receiving medications the elderly and disabled face through former homemaker services. Homemakers would clean the residences of homebound, low-income clients who were unable to clean or pay someone to clean. Rather than clean their homes, clients often would ask homemakers to pick up their medications from nearby pharmacies.

“Nationally, individuals 60 years of age or older are prescribed an average of five medications. These rural Mississippians often don’t have a support system to help them receive and take these medications,” said GTPDD Director Rudy Johnson.

Instead, these clients would pay friends or neighbors to pick up and bring their medications to them with money they typically couldn’t afford to spend.

“This continued for years. So, I went to the GTPDD Board of Directors and told them we needed to open a closed-door pharmacy to help these people by delivering their medications to their homes,” said Johnson.

The closed-door pharmacy operates differently than retail pharmacies such as CVS and Walgreens. As a closed-door pharmacy, only staff can enter the pharmacy. Maintenance prescriptions and vitamins that are taken daily are filled. These medications are prepackaged and labeled with contents by date and time to take and delivered on a 28-day rotation, so that customers will never run out of their medications. However, like retail pharmacies, the GTPDD Pharmacy accepts most insurances and payment types.

To begin using the pharmacy, potential customers first must contact the pharmacy to set up a home visit with a GTPDD Health Information Technician, who will explain how the pharmacy works and begin the process for customers to use the pharmacy.

“If they sign-up to use the pharmacy, I’ll set up a pill planner for them for the next few business days and bring the remaining medicine back to the pharmacy to package and label. Then, we’ll call and get all their prescriptions transferred to us from other pharmacies or doctors and check for any changes in their medications. On the next visit, I bring their newly packaged medication to their home and explain how they should take it. After this last visit, patients will continue to receive their prepackaged, labeled medications every 28 days by delivery,” said Tiffany Gilliland, GTPDD Health Information Technician.

The GTPDD Pharmacy delivers to any residents in the seven-county district of Choctaw, Clay, Lowndes, Noxubee, Oktibbeha, Webster and Winston and charges no extra fees for delivery or packaging. Customers only pay their insurance’s co-pay.

“We’re not in this for the money; we’re in this for the benefit of anybody—not just the elderly and disabled—on maintenance prescriptions,” said Johnson.

Formed in 1971 to improve and enlarge economic development and civic improvement, the GTPDD serves the geographically-connected Appalachian counties of Choctaw, Clay, Lowndes, Noxubee, Oktibbeha, Webster and Winston.

The GTPDD’s main office is centrally located in Starkville at 106 Miley Drive and can be contacted at 662-324-7860 or [gtpdd@gtpdd.com](mailto:gtpdd@gtpdd.com).

The GTPDD is online at [www.gtpdd.com](http://www.gtpdd.com).