Prescription Access is a program of the Healthcare Consortium, created to help eligible Columbia County residents receive their medications at low or no cost.

Nearly every drug company has a prescription assistance program that allows individuals to receive prescription drugs at reduced cost, and very often, at no cost, for those who qualify. Each set of qualification standards is different. Usually they are:

- Lack of insurance or lack of prescription coverage under insurance plan.
- Income level that makes payment for prescription medicine a financial hardship. Income guidelines vary from company to company.

The process

- Get together a list of your medications, paying close attention to spelling.

- Use the Internet. If you don't have computer access at home, your local library should have an Internet-ready computer. *www.needymeds.org* is one of the best websites to start with. On the left side of the "needymeds" screen click on either brand name or generic. Click on the first letter of the name of the medication you are looking for. When a list appears, look up the name of your medication in the alphabetical list and click on it. If you can't find your medication, try looking in both the brand and generic lists. You can ask your doctor or pharmacist for the brand and generic names of your medication. Other websites you might also want to try are: www.rxhope.com or www.rxassist.org . If you need help with excessive copays try www.copays.org .

- Once you have found the medication you need, print the directions and the application form. Follow the directions very carefully so that you can be sure that you get a response from the pharmaceutical company as soon as possible. Most applications have a section that must be filled out by your doctor. You may need to bring it or mail it to your doctor's office for information and signature, and possibly for a prescription.

- Mail all of your forms and documentation to the address listed on the application. Usually, you will need to include income information and a prescription. Again, follow the directions carefully! If you can, keep a copy of the forms you mail, or at least keep notes on when you mailed the forms, as well as the directions about reapplying (every three months, for most).

For assistance, call the Prescription Access Program at the Healthcare Consortium at 822-8820

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The Healthcare Consortium
A collaborative rural health network
Improving access to quality health care