

CMS is planning a one day Part D Open enrollment event for Monday, December 7th at the Seattle Regional Office. The meeting notice and preliminary agenda is attached. Written invitations were also sent to each of the Tribes in Region 10 earlier this week so many of you may have already heard about this opportunity.

I know many of you know how to enroll beneficiaries in the Part D program and to annually determine whether the current plan is the best for each individual. Additionally, I know many of you are working effectively with the SHIP or SHIBA (State Health Insurance Program or Beneficiary Assistance) in your states. **I encourage you to continue those efforts.** For those who are still confused about the number of Part D plans, how they benefit the individual and the Indian Health program this training is targeted at you. Please feel free to share this information with other staff – Contract Health Services, elder’s programs, social services, etc. who may also assist elders and other Medicare beneficiaries in accessing services for which they are eligible.

As you will see on the agenda, one of the topics that will be discussed is sharing what other tribes are doing. I know there are tribes who automatically enroll all beneficiaries and the tribe pays the premiums and cost share; there are others who assist but don’t help to pay the costs; there are questions about creditable coverage and what that means. Please bring your strategies, questions, and challenges to share.

I do want to make sure to have adequate materials, so please try and let me know who will be coming. I realize schedules are fluid -especially this time of year, so don’t feel constrained by a need to let me know, or a change in your schedule.

*I hope to see many of you on the 7th. For those who I don't see,
best wishes for a Wonderful and Safe Holiday Season!
Cecile*

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The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) invites Indian Health Programs

WHAT: To learn more about Medicare Part D plans; how to assist beneficiaries in identifying the best plans to meet their needs; how to use the Part D Plan Finder; and ways Indian health programs are encouraging participation.

WHEN: December 7, 2009 10:00 – 3:00

WHERE: Seattle Regional CMS Office, 11th Floor
2201 6th Avenue
Seattle, WA. 98121

WHO: IHS, Tribal, and Urban Health Directors, CHS Managers, CHRs, Business Office staff, Tribal Elder Program Staff and others who may help Medicare beneficiaries understand and access Part D Prescription Drug Benefits

WHY: Part D Open Enrollment runs from November 15th through December 31st. Assisting eligible Medicare beneficiaries access Part D benefits can improve health status and save pharmacy and Contract Health Service resources.

REGISTER: Cecile Greenway, Native American Contact, CMS
(206) 615-2428 or cecile.greenway@cms.hhs.gov

Indian Health Medicare Part D Assistance Information

Monday, December 7th 10:00 – 3:00

CMS Regional Office – 2201 6th Avenue, Seattle 98121

(206) 615-2306 [main number]

DRAFT AGENDA

10:00 – 10:10 WELCOME – Tom Kickham, Acting Regional Administrator

10:10 – 10:30 INTRODUCTIONS – Cecile Greenway, Native American Contact

10:30 – 10:45 Break

10:45 – 11:30 PART D MEDICARE OVERVIEW – Andrew Tartella

11:30 – 12:00 HOW PART D WORKS WITH INDIAN HEALTH - Tribal Representatives
/ Discussion

12:00 – 1:00 LUNCH, ON YOUR OWN

1:00 – 2:15 HOW TO USE THE CMS PLAN FINDER – Julie Bannester

2:15 – 2:45 LOW INCOME ASSISTANCE (Social Security, Medicaid, and Estate
Recovery Issues) – Kirk Larson, Social Security Administration; Maria Garza, CMS;

2:45 – 3:00 QUESTIONS and EVALUATION – Cecile Greenway