



NEWS COLUMN – Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc.

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Medicare Prescription Drug Plan Discount – Are You Eligible?

Pamela K. Matura, Executive Director, Area Agency on Aging District 7

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Do you know if you are eligible for the Medicare Prescription Drug Plan Discount?

There are many individuals in our district who are unaware they are eligible to receive this wonderful assistance. A simple phone call to our Agency can help determine whether you meet the eligibility requirements. The Area Agency on Aging District 7 (AAA7) is able to provide this service through the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act (MIPPA) grant from the Ohio Department of Aging. This project provides outreach to and enrollment assistance for individuals who may be eligible for the Low-Income Subsidy and/or Medicare Savings Program, as well as other Medicare premium assistance programs.

Each year, our Agency conducts outreach to our communities in order to better identify who might be eligible for the “Extra Help” and Medicare Savings programs. Just last year, in 2015, 63 people, who called our Agency to inquire about the program, learned they were eligible, and all combined were able to save a total of \$189,678 for an average savings of \$3,011.00 per person. In addition, we were able to save 107 individuals an additional \$285,006.00 in savings by running Medicare Part D comparisons and changing their Part D plans for an average savings of \$2,664.00 per person during the open enrollment period for Medicare in 2015. **That’s a grand total of \$474,684.00 saved just last year! Almost a half-million dollars of savings for individuals in our district!** And that savings is also good for our local communities as dollars saved can be turned in to increased support for local businesses and entities.

Low Income Subsidy (LIS) or “Extra Help” is a discount plan that can: lower your prescription co-pays; cover all or part of your Medicare Part D monthly premiums; or eliminate the “doughnut hole” of coverage for your medications. Part D is Medicare’s prescription drug coverage and is available to anyone eligible for Medicare Part A or Part B. Those with Medicare may enroll in Part D coverage through either a stand-alone plan or a Medicare Advantage plan. To be eligible for “Extra Help,” income guidelines and qualifications must be met, and the AAA7 can help determine whether you might be able to benefit from this program, and if so, assist you with the application process. All of the individuals we were able to reach out to throughout our communities during the year were also assisted in additional ways, including Medicare Part D sign-ups, help with finding a Medicare supplemental insurance, providing other services made available through our Agency, and references to additional community organizations that may be able to help. The AAA7 covers the following counties: Adams, Brown, Gallia, Highland, Jackson, Lawrence, Pike, Ross, Scioto and Vinton.

If you would like to find out if you are eligible for “extra help” with your Medicare Part D coverage, call us - we can help! Contact Kristy Bowman at our Agency Monday through Friday from 8:00 am until 4:30 pm toll-free at 1-800-582-7277, extension 250. We can complete the application over the phone in just a few minutes. In addition, we can also assist you with any other Medicare questions you might have.

Or, if your community group or agency has an event coming up that you would like us to participate in to provide more information, please let us know – you can reach us at 1-800-582-7277 or e-mail to info@aaa7.org.

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