

Fall 2014

**MEDICARE
RIGHTS** CENTER

Getting Medicare right

Inside Medicare Rights

CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF GETTING MEDICARE RIGHT

For 25 years, the Medicare Rights Center has helped older adults and people with disabilities obtain the health care they need. Through our direct counseling, advocacy, and policy work, we increase access to care for our helpline clients, and for all people with Medicare.

Using real experiences and case studies, we also bring the concerns and needs of people with Medicare to lawmakers in Washington, DC. Our direct service to seniors and people with disabilities gives us a unique perspective and the credibility to advise policymakers on ways to improve the Medicare program.

Recently I asked one of our long-time supporters why she chooses to give to Medicare Rights. Having received in-depth assistance on our helpline a few years back for a problem she had struggled with for weeks, she said:

“ You were able to help me when nobody else could. I appreciate all that you do and wanted to show that appreciation by donating. ”

-Teresa C.

Thank you for making this past quarter century possible for us. On behalf of everyone here at Medicare Rights, we mean it when we say that you have played an instrumental role in bringing affordable health care to those who need it most.

My sincere hope is that you'll join us as we begin our next 25 years, making sure that the Medicare program works the way it should—right now and for future generations.

Sincerely,



Joe Baker
President

25th Anniversary Gala

Monday, October 20, 2014

Mandarin Oriental, New York

80 Columbus Circle at 60th Street

6:00 p.m. Cocktails

7:00 p.m. Dinner

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
www.medicarerights.org/events



MEDICARE REMINDER

FALL OPEN ENROLLMENT

OCTOBER 15 - DECEMBER 7

For more information, visit www.MedicareInteractive.org

Program Update: Medicare Minute

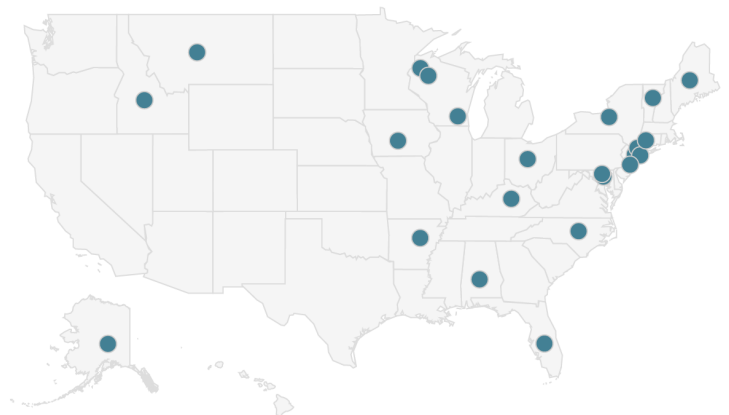
In September 2013, the Medicare Rights Center secured a 17-month grant from the federal Administration for Community Living (ACL) to launch a program—through partnerships with nationwide Senior Medicare Patrols (SMPs) and disability-serving organizations—that would implement the Medicare Minute program in new locations across the country. The goal of the SMP Medicare Minute program is to **empower people with disabilities to take control of their health care and combat fraud.**

The SMP Medicare Minute builds on Medicare Rights' 13 years of experience developing and distributing traditional Medicare Minutes, short, monthly scripts that volunteers in communities across the country use to educate and engage their peers in conversations about Medicare. Today, Medicare Minutes reach an estimated 95,000 individuals each year with timely Medicare information.

Now, through the SMP Medicare Minute program, the Medicare Minute model has undergone a significant expansion and transformation, with presentations now including tips for preventing Medicare fraud, and content tailored specifically to serve people with disabilities.

Thus far, Medicare Rights has launched the SMP Medicare Minute program in 20 states, including Kentucky, Alaska, Iowa, Maryland, and Maine. Our state-based SMP partners engage volunteers who go into their communities each month to lead Medicare Minutes, fielding questions and building audience confidence in their ability to navigate their Medicare coverage. Popular Medicare Minute topics of late have included: "The Affordable Care Act and Medicare", "Part D Appeals", and "Durable Medical Equipment". Through this project, intended to serve people with disabilities nationally, Medicare Rights has also cultivated partnerships with national and local disability-serving organizations, connecting SMPs with local chapters that could be good sites for SMP Medicare Minute presentations.

Medicare Minutes Across the Country



Coalition to Protect the Rights of New York's Dually Eligible



certain core areas of focus, including: network adequacy, plan payment and performance measures, stakeholder and beneficiary engagement, appeals and grievance procedures, and ombudsman programs.

Medicare Rights continues to work to advocate for important protections and increased quality of care for people eligible for both Medicare and Medicaid, also known as dually eligible. In July 2012, Medicare Rights formalized this work with a grant from the New York State Health Foundation to create a coalition to engage in advocacy for individuals eligible for dually eligible New Yorkers. The Coalition to Protect the Rights of New York's Dually Eligible (CPRNYDE), led by Medicare Rights, now has over 40 organizational members and a strong Steering Committee.

Last summer, Medicare Rights' work with the coalition was further expanded through a grant from Community Catalyst, which named New York as one of the states under its Voices for Better Health Project. Under this grant, the Coalition has been able to drill down its advocacy to

Additionally, with this funding, Medicare Rights created and maintains a Coalition website: www.nyduals.org. The website allows advocates both in New York and in other states implementing managed care programs for dually eligible individuals to gain insight on the advocacy Medicare Rights leads in New York.

Medicare Rights has also received support from the Altman Foundation to create educational materials for dually eligible individuals and the professionals that work with them most closely. Medicare Rights will also continue to lead the Coalition to Protect the Rights of New York's Dually Eligible in advocacy with the Department of Health and CMS around FIDA's implementation and the continued rollout of MLTC throughout New York.

Medicare Rights Welcomes New Board Member



Jonathan Blum

and Medicaid Services (CMS) overseeing the Medicare program.

As the top Medicare official at CMS, Blum was responsible for overseeing the regulation and payment of Medicare fee-for-service providers, privately-administered Medicare health plans, and the Medicare prescription drug program. He

This month at its annual meeting, the Board of Directors of the Medicare Rights Center elected a slate of directors and officers for the coming year, including a new member, Jonathan Blum, the former Principal Deputy Administrator and Director for the Centers for Medicare

served as an advisor to Senate Finance Committee members and former chairman, Senator Max Baucus, where he worked on prescription drug and Medicare Advantage policies during the development of the Medicare Modernization Act. He also served as a program analyst focused on Medicare at the White House Office of Management and Budget. Currently, he is the Executive Vice President for Medical Affairs at CareFirst Blue Cross, which provides health care coverage in Maryland, the District of Columbia and Northern Virginia.

Blum joins an eclectic board with experience in health care, law, journalism, academia, government, and finance. For more information about Medicare Rights' board of directors, visit www.medicarerights.org/about-us/board.

On June 28, 1989, the Medicare Rights Center was created to help older and disabled Americans access their health care. Take a look at our journey...so far.

Come and visit our special 25th anniversary celebration page, where we look back at our beginnings as a small call center, hear from just a few of the many clients we've assisted, and check in with some former staff who have continued working to improve the health care system for people in need.

Join us for a trip down memory lane! Flip through our scrapbook to see snapshots in time, as we grew from a helpline powered by a few dedicated and passionate volunteers to an organization serving over one million people annually through our national helpline and online learning tool, Medicare Interactive. And while you're there, share your memories with a birthday greeting!

This year and in years to come, we will be able to build upon these 25 years of success, reach new milestones, and provide even more information, advocacy, and education for people with Medicare and their families. Thank you for taking this journey with us.



www.medicarerights.org/25th-anniversary

Support Us

Our work is made possible by the support of people like you. To donate, visit www.medicarerights.org/donate

The Medicare Rights Center is a national, nonprofit consumer service organization that works to ensure access to affordable health care for older adults and people with disabilities through counseling and advocacy, educational programs and public policy initiatives.

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