**MIPPA BEST PRACTICES**

**STAFFING***Increase the amount of time devoted to MIPPA grant activities by hiring a part-time staff person; giving additional hours to an existing staff person; or utilizing a volunteer to help with other work, freeing up time for the Elder Benefit Specialist (EBS) to devote to MIPPA grant activities.*

* Provide regular EBS office hours in outlying and rural areas.
* Dedicate adequate staff hours to MIPPA activities to ensure availability of a Medicare Specialist throughout your geographic service area.

**COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS**  *Build partnerships with other professionals and agencies in your community who come into contact with your target audience*. *Educate these partners on MIPPA programs, provide them with resources they can share with their clients and explain where and when to make referrals. Seek opportunities to set up MIPPA enrollment events and activities at their already scheduled events. Important community partners include:*

* **Local Social Security Office --** Encourage them to refer their clients to Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) and/or Aging Unit staff for assistance. Explain the EBS role in assisting people to complete applications as well as screening them for other benefit programs.
* **Pharmacies** – Provide resources and make sure pharmacist is aware of MIPPA programs and where and when to refer customers.
* **Libraries** – Connect with reference librarians.
* **Churches and Interfaith Programs** – Talk with the administrative assistant or pastor.
* **Food Pantries—**Provide resources and educate staff on MIPPA programs.
* **Hospitals and Clinics** – Talk to social services and/or financial service staff.
* **Other benefit programs** such as Homestead Tax Credit, Farmers Market Vouchers, AARP Tax Aide sessions, FoodShare (SNAP), Low Income Heating Assistance Program (LIHEAP), and Stockbox.

**OUTREACH***Use a wide range of outreach techniques to ensure you are reaching the maximum number of people. Connect with Medicare beneficiaries through presentations, office or home visits, vendor booths, marketing materials, advertising via radio, television, newspapers, etc.*

* Hold regular “Welcome to Medicare” presentations so that new beneficiaries are identified right away. Schedule presentations in advance and at various times and locations, so your community partners know where and when they can send new clients.
* Utilize volunteers to help with outreach, open enrollment or other SHIP activities. Use “Welcome to Medicare” trainings to seek out potential SHIP volunteers.
* Offer a variety of presentations on all of the MIPPA programs (LIS/MSP/SeniorCare, Part D, health promotion activities and Medicare preventive benefits) in various locations throughout the county.
* Create a marketing plan specific to MIPPA programs including radio, TV and newspaper advertisements.
* Promote “word of mouth” outreach by asking satisfied clients to share information with neighbors and friends.

**TRAINING**  
I*n addition to teaching Medicare beneficiaries about MIPPA programs, it is equally important to offer training for your colleagues and community partners, so that they understand MIPPA programs, know how and when to make referrals, and are aware of upcoming community MIPPA events. Regular training should be provided to ensure new staff are trained, as well as to stress the importance of MIPPA programs.*

* Regularly educate all ADRC and Aging Unit staff who work with customers. If possible, attend staff meetings regularly for the following:
  + Information & Assistance (I&A) Specialists
  + Disability and Elder Benefit Specialists (DBS and EBS)
  + Nutrition Site Managers - Explain MIPPA programs, publicize upcoming events, and share resources to pass along to their diners, as well as home-delivered meal volunteers.
  + Health Promotion/Prevention Coordinators – Learn about their programs and collaborate on outreach efforts.
* Regularly attend Income Maintenance staff meetings to explain programs, advertise upcoming MIPPA events and discuss proper referrals.
* Provide ongoing training to community partners about MIPPA programs and when and where to make referrals.
* Attend coalition meetings (e.g., I-Team, Caregiver, Senior Concerns Consortium) to continue to expand community partnerships.