**Medicare Outreach Idea of the Month**

May 2019

**Partner with Local Social Security Office**

Building partnerships with other agencies in your community is a crucial best practice that will help to bring your message to more people. Whether you’re reaching out to pharmacies, libraries, hospitals or the many other agencies that see Medicare beneficiaries every day, connecting with them will significantly enhance your outreach efforts. And one of the most important agencies to connect with is your local Social Security Administration office.

While some people apply for Medicare online, many still call or visit their local SSA office for help applying or for assistance with related questions. Developing a relationship with the SSA staff is a good way to make sure they know about you and the services you can provide. In fact, after developing a relationship with their local SSA office, several Elder Benefit Specialists have reported that the SSA has become their greatest referral source.

If you haven’t already done so, contact your local Social Security office to introduce yourself. Consider scheduling a meeting to educate the staff about your role and all the ways you and your agency can help people with Medicare, from making sure people know what to consider when making their Medicare choices to making sure people with low-income are aware of the programs that can help them. You can also share the types of issues that you see occurring and discuss ways to resolve them.

Explain when to make a referral to you and provide them with outreach materials that can be shared with consumers. To maintain the relationship, be sure to check back with them on a regular basis to see if any new issues have come up, to answer any questions, and to replenish their supply of outreach materials.

Expand your Medicare outreach by making this important community partnership a priority for you this month!

**To view all the GWAAR Medicare Outreach and Assistance Resources, follow the link to our webpage:**

<https://gwaar.org/medicare-outreach-and-assistance-resources>

By the GWAAR Medicare Outreach Team