**Medicare Outreach Idea of the Month**

May 2024

**Strengthening Community Bonds: Outreach at Summer Events**

Being a part of the State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP), the mission goes beyond providing assistance; we strive to build strong, supportive communities. One powerful way we achieve this is through outreach at summer events, where we can engage with residents, raise awareness about our services, and connect with those in need. Here's how you can make the most of these opportunities to be visible and make a lasting impact.

1. **Selecting the Right Events**: Start by identifying summer events that align with your goals. Look for gatherings that attract a diverse range of community members, such as festivals, fairs, and neighborhood picnics. Consider the demographics of the attendees and the nature of the event to ensure it's a good fit for your outreach efforts.
2. **Planning and Preparation**: Once you've chosen the events to participate in, it's essential to plan your approach carefully. Determine the goals for your outreach efforts, whether it's raising awareness about a particular issue, promoting a new program, or simply connecting with the community. Prepare materials that effectively communicate your message, such as brochures, flyers, and banners.
3. **Engaging with Attendees**: At the event, your focus should be on engaging with attendees in a meaningful way. Be approachable, empathetic, and genuinely interested in their concerns. Use this opportunity to educate people about your services, listen to their needs, and offer support and resources where possible.
4. **Providing Value**: To encourage people to engage with you, consider offering something of value, such as information on accessing services, tips for improving their Medicare understanding, or have fun activities to engage their interest in Medicare. Ensure that whatever you offer is helpful to the community you serve.
5. **Building Relationships**: Building relationships is key to successful outreach. Take the time to connect with attendees on a personal level, learn about their needs and concerns, and offer support and guidance. By building trust and rapport, you can make a lasting impression and become a trusted resource in the community.
6. **Follow-Up**: After the event, it's crucial to follow up with the people you've connected with. Send them a message providing additional information or resources, offer your support on their issue, and follow up with professionals. This helps to solidify the connections you've made and demonstrates your commitment to the community.
7. **Community Engagement Beyond Events**: In addition to attending summer events, you can also get involved in the community in other ways. Consider hosting workshops or seminars, participating in local initiatives, or collaborating with other organizations to address community needs. By being an active and engaged member of the community, you can strengthen your brand and make a meaningful impact.
8. **Measuring Impact**: Finally, it's essential to measure the impact of your outreach efforts. Track the number of people you spoke with at the event and report through your outreach data entry. This information can help you refine your approach and make your future outreach efforts even more effective.

In conclusion, summer events provide a valuable opportunity for your organization to connect with the community, raise awareness about your services, and make a positive impact. By selecting the right events, planning your approach carefully, engaging with attendees authentically, and following up effectively, you can strengthen your brand and build strong, supportive communities.

**Updates on the** [**Medicare Outreach and Assistance Resources webpage**](https://gwaar.org/medicare-outreach-and-assistance-resources)**:**

* [Trainings-Medicare Outreach](https://gwaar.org/granttee-trainings-and-information) & [SHIP Volunteer Resources](https://gwaar.org/SHIP-volunteer-resources) (Training)
  + 4/4/2024 – SHIP Professional Volunteers and Partnership [PPT](https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2008046) and [Recording](https://gwaar.org/4-4-2024-ship-professional-volunteers-and-partnerships-recording) added.
* Basic SHIP Counselor Training & [SHIP Volunteers Resources](https://gwaar.org/SHIP-volunteer-resources) (Training)
  + [April 2024 Basic SHIP Counselor Training Checklist](https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2007832) Updated.
  + April 2024 Basic Training PPTs updated.
* Hard-to-Reach Communities
  + [2024 Native American MSP/LIS Fact Sheet](https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2006477) Updated.
* Outreach Tools for Professionals
  + [2024 Eligibility Quick Check](https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2007233)
* Tools for Professionals
  + [2024 One Page Medicare Costs](https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2007231) updated.
  + [2023-2024 CMS Guide to Consumer Mailings](https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2008119) added.
  + [CMS Memo to Part D Plans – LIS Cleanup – April 2024](https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2008120) added.
* Plan Finder Tools
  + [2024 Guide to the Medicare Plan Finder](https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2007068) updated.
  + [CMS: How to Use Medicare Plan Finder Video – Oct 2023](https://gwaar.org/cms-how-to-use-medicare-plan-finder-video-oct-2022) added.
* [Educational Videos for Medicare Outreach](https://gwaar.org/educational-videos-for-medicare-outreach)
  + [Welcome to Medicare PowerPoint 2024](https://gwaar.org/_data/cms_files/Welcome%20to%20Medicare%20PPT%202024.pptx?u=1cXwTb) updated.
  + [Welcome to Medicare PowerPoint 2024 – Customizable](https://gwaar.org/_data/cms_files/Welcome%20to%20Medicare%20PPT%202024_Customizable.pptx?u=1cXuKT) updated.
* [Brochures and Posters for Outreach](https://gwaar.org/brochures-posters-for-outreach)
  + MSP/LIS/SeniorCare Brochures and Inserts
    - [2024 MSP Brochure](https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2007298) updated.
    - [2024 MSP/LIS/SeniorCare Data Sheet](https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2007232) updated.
    - [2024 Brochure Insert - Eligibility Guidelines - English](https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2007243) updated.
    - [2024 Brochure Insert - Eligibility Guidelines - Spanish](https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2007244) updated.
    - [2024 Brochure Insert - Eligibility Guidelines - Tribes](https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2007245) updated.
    - [DHS Medicare Savings Program Handout (8 languages)](https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/library/collection/p-10062) updated.

By the [GWAAR Medicare Outreach Coordinator](mailto:Alyssa.Kulpa@gwaar.org)

**Upcoming Optional Wisconsin SHIP Trainings**

**Utilizing Medicare Minutes to Educate, Engage, and Empower!**

* **Date:**Wednesday, June 26, 2024, from 11a.m.–12 p.m.
* [Zoom link](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87376894085?pwd=JKHq9WNxkiqlq6BahqMNqSbvlVfUMm.1); [Outlook event](https://zoom.us/meeting/tZMucO-gpz8qEtHrQVkkinnjBCips5PDFBPK/ics)
* **Intended audience**: SHIP counselors and supervisors looking to enhance their utilization of Medicare Minutes provided by the SHIP TA Center.
* **Objectives:**
  + Learn about the SHIP TA Center and Medicare Minutes.
  + Explore strategies for integrating Medicare Minutes into consistent Medicare outreach efforts.
  + Understand how Medicare Minutes can be used to educate, engage, and empower SHIP counselors, Medicare beneficiaries, and other professionals within your community.

**Growing Partnerships: Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP)**

* **Date:**Wednesday, August 7, 2024, from 11a.m.–12 p.m.
* [Zoom link](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89981623766?pwd=6rymD9KtE8kGAA0Y3unw4gUPHAJ6bn.1); [Outlook event](https://zoom.us/meeting/tZ0kf-iurDgtHNJM2MSqLnmBPIi9Pq58xsfn/ics)
* **Intended audience**: SHIP counselors and supervisors seeking to enhance their understanding of the Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) program and its potential for partnership in Medicare outreach efforts.
* **Objectives:**
  + Gain insight into the Wisconsin Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) program.
  + Explore the expanded SMP Volunteer team and their role in advancing mission delivery.
  + Learn when to refer to and partner with SMP for successful Medicare outreach in Wisconsin.

**Continuing Education Hours (CEH) Opportunity**

DHS has partnered with the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point to issue Continuing Education Hours/Units (CEH/CEU) to SHIP training participants. You must attend **LIVE** trainings to be eligible for CEHs/CEUs. Your attendance is verified using Zoom attendance reports and completion of the survey after the live event. Please email [Alyssa Kulpa](mailto:Alyssa.Kulpa@gwaar.org), GWAAR Medicare Outreach Coordinator, at [alyssa.kulpa@gwaar.org](mailto:Alyssa.Kulpa@gwaar.org) with any questions regarding the trainings and please email Pam Watson, MIPPA Grant Coordinator, at [pamela.watson@dhs.wisconsin.gov](mailto:pamela.watson@dhs.wisconsin.gov) with any questions regarding the Continuing Education Hours (CEH) Opportunity.