

SHIP & MIPPA GRANTS

2022 ACCESS COMMITTEE UPDATE

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WHAT IS SHIP?

- ❑ SHIP stands for the **State Health Insurance Assistance Program**, and it is overseen in Wisconsin and funded by the federal Administration for Community Living (or ACL).
- ❑ There is a SHIP program in every state. Funds and program direction are administered by DHS in Wisconsin. SHIP is the go-to resource for people with Medicare to get answers and counseling regarding their questions, options and complications. In Wisconsin, this can include counselors from the Elder Benefit Specialist (EBS) program, some Case Managers (CM) at focal points, Disability Rights Wisconsin Counselors, and Medigap Counselors. There are new efforts to have some hospital employees to become SHIP counselors as well.
- ❑ SHIP Counselors get access to specialized training, as well as a unique ID for certified counselors, which they have access to a special Medicare hotline they can call with questions for beneficiaries they are assisting. What is unique about this hotline and ID, is that the beneficiary does not need to be present. There is an understood trust in that relationship.
- ❑ There are 99 EBS, 87 DBS and 3 EBS/DBS in Wisconsin most of whom are SHIP Counselors.

WHAT IS MIPPA?

- ❑ **The Medicare Improvements for Patient and Providers Act (MIPPA)** of 2008 was legislation related to Medicare that allows for federal funding for State Health Insurance Assistance Programs (SHIPs), Area Agencies in Aging (AAAs) and Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs) to focus on low-income Medicare beneficiaries become aware of and apply for programs that make Medicare affordable by lowering the cost of premiums and deductibles.
- ❑ The initiative also includes special efforts to target not just **low-income, but also rural areas and Native American elders**. The purpose and goal of MIPPA programs is to educate and provide assistance to targeted populations of Medicare beneficiaries for the assistance programs that can benefit them.
- ❑ **Topics reported by counselors under MIPPA Grant activity that help funding** include:
 - ❑ Medicaid topics including screening, an emphasis on Medicare Savings Programs (QMB, SLMB, SLMB+), Medicare Buy-in process, and Recertification assistance
 - ❑ Medicare Low-Income Subsidy (LIS)/Extra Help
 - ❑ SeniorCare Level 1 (draws on Medicaid funds)
 - ❑ Medicare Preventive Services

WHAT'S NEW FOR SHIP...

- ❑ SHIP Counselors now have to be officially “certified”. Existing EBS (and CMs in Dane County) had through June to take the test through the SHIP website to be certified. The goal is to provide a level of scrutiny and distinction to the title that should be reassuring to beneficiaries that they are getting someone with advanced knowledge helping them with their issues.
- ❑ For SHIP 2021 data – showed that WI SHIP counselors handled over 54k client contacts in the state. In Dane County there was a higher number the prior year, attributed to the increase in phone contacts due to COVID-19 restrictions. At this point, people are beginning to meet more in-person and provide counseling assistance in the areas outlined meaning people are getting assistance in other places like with case managers as well.
- ❑ SHIP targets our most vulnerable residents: 1/3 are low-income seniors, a little over 1/4 are people over age 74, and 12% are people with significant disabilities. This statistic remains the same as for 2021.

WHAT'S NEW FOR MIPPA...

- ❑ There is a new MIPPA Program coordinator at DHS, at the state level, helping administer the program and grant funds to MIPPA programs in the state, as well as coordinate new outreach. Her name is Pamela Watson.
- ❑ MIPPA outreach remains extensive with 12 focal point newsletters, as well as the Caregiver Chronicles newsletter in Dane County, receiving monthly article submissions from myself promoting MIPPA topic areas. Outreach for these newsletters is in the thousands every month. For example, the total number of potential seniors that could be reached by newsletter is about 13,430 people per month. March of 2022 revealed that 6,130 people were actually reached.

SHIP & MIPPA Outreach & Assistance Numbers for 2021 (DHS)

- ❑ Total Beneficiary Contacts in Wisconsin: 54,084
- ❑ Group Outreach & Education Attendees: 14,730
- ❑ Contacts with Enrollment Assistance: 41,854
- ❑ Contacts with Beneficiaries Under Age 65: 6,728
- ❑ Contacts with Hard-to-Reach Beneficiaries: 42,990
 - ❑ Low Income: 15,779
 - ❑ Rural: 26,203
 - ❑ English as a Second Language: 928

2021-2022 SHIP & MIPPA GOALS (DHS)

SHIP Goals:

- Create at-a-glance reference tools
- Build a volunteer base

MIPPA Goals:

- Implement centralized outreach campaign
- Strengthen partnerships
- Expand resources in other languages

ADDITIONAL NOTES...

- ❑ **BOTH SHIP & MIPPA** Outreach through our Welcome to Medicare seminars/webinars has reached a total of 412 beneficiaries directly via zoom since last June 2021.
- ❑ Dane County's first return to in-person "**Welcome to Medicare**" seminar by the AAA EBS Program, including BOTH SHIP & MIPPA outreach materials for beneficiaries will be this July 14, 2022, at Waunakee Senior Center!

RESOURCES

❑ EBS PROGRAM:

<https://www.danecountyhumanservices.org/Disability-and-Aging/Senior-Services/Elder-Benefit-Specialist-Program#:~:text=The%20EBS%20Program%20provides%20legal,isolating%20effect%20on%20the%20older>

❑ SHIP QUICK FACTS:

<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/po/p00166.pdf>

❑ DHS PUBLICATION: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/benefit-specialists/medicare-counseling.htm>

❑ REVENT SHIP OUTREACH:

<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p03238.pdf>