Department of Health & Human Services

ACL News & Info

Administration for Community Living

For seniors and people with disabilities

Tuesday, August 21, 2012

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Redesign of Medicare.Gov to Improve Online Experience for Beneficiaries

A redesign of the medicare.gov website is now complete, making content more accessible and easier for beneficiaries, their families and caregivers to understand. Today's redesign, announced by Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) Acting Administrator Marilyn Tavenner, supports CMS's commitment to provide better customer service.

The new design responds to mobile devices, like tablets and smartphones. Users can get information such as coverage and cost details, anytime, anywhere, and in the most convenient format. Medicare beneficiaries, counselors, and caregivers can check if a letter they received in the mail is an official communication from Medicare by viewing descriptions of Medicare mailings. The popular "Medicare & You" handbook now has its own landing page for an easy access complement to the annual print mailing.

The new site will allow most users to find the content they're looking for directly from the home page. These features include:

- A search for whether a specific test, item, or service is covered under original Medicare;
- The ability to get customized information based on a beneficiary's specific situation;

• Quick links to replace a lost Medicare card, find a Medicare Advantage or prescription drug plan, and get help with health care costs.

To see examples of these new features, please visit:
http://www.cms.gov/apps/files/Medicare-gov-LB.pdf

To view and start using the new tools and additional information, users are invited to visit www.Medicare.gov

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HHS Partners with Pharmacies to Educate Medicare Beneficiaries about New Health Benefits

This week, Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Kathleen Sebelius announced partnerships with several pharmacies to help customers learn about new Medicare benefits available to them under the Affordable Care Act – the health care law. These partnerships – with CVS Caremark, Walgreens, Thrifty White, Walmart, and Sam's Club – will provide Medicare beneficiaries a range of educational materials on newly available preventive services, as well as savings on prescription drug spending in the "donut hole" coverage gap.

Some examples of how pharmacy partners are working to increase awareness of preventive services available under Medicare include the following:

- CVS Caremark is distributing material about new preventive services covered at no cost to beneficiaries at its more than 7,300 CVS/pharmacy stores and 600 MinuteClinic locations, through brochures, register receipt messages and online.
- Thrifty White Pharmacy is providing information on preventive services through its 85 locations throughout the Midwest.
- Walgreens is distributing information in nearly 8,000 pharmacies and over 350 Take Care Clinic locations, as well as using in-store announcements and providing this information as part of its Walgreens Way to Well Health Tour with AARP.
- HHS is working with Walmart and Sam's Club to provide healthcare information to their shoppers online.

Other pharmacies or partners can find information on how to work with CMS to educate consumers about the benefits available to them at:
http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Outreach/Current-Partnership-Opportunities/index.html

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People with Medicare Save More Than $4.1 Billion on Prescription Drugs

18 million with Medicare also receive free preventive services in the first seven months of 2012

Nearly 5.4 million seniors and people with disabilities have saved more than $4.1 billion on prescription drugs as a result of the Affordable Care Act, Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Kathleen Sebelius announced yesterday. Seniors in the Medicare prescription drug coverage gap known as the "donut hole" have saved an average of $768. During the first seven months of 2012, the new health care law has helped nearly 18 million people with original Medicare get at least one preventive service at no cost to them.

The health care law includes benefits to make Medicare prescription drug coverage more affordable. In 2010, anyone with Medicare who hit the prescription drug donut hole received a $250 rebate. In 2011, people with Medicare who hit the donut hole began receiving a 50 percent discount on covered brand-name drugs and a discount on generic drugs. These discounts and Medicare coverage gradually increase until 2020 when the donut hole is fully closed.

For state-by-state information on savings in the donut hole, please visit: http://www.cms.gov/apps/files/donut-hole-data-chart.pdf (PDF - 206 KB)

For state-by-state information on utilization of free preventive services, please visit: http://www.cms.gov/apps/files/preventive-data-chart-first-seven-months-2012.pdf (PDF - 281 KB)

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Stay Informed

White House Monthly Disability Call

Each month the White House hosts a conference call to give an update on various disability issues as well as to introduce persons who work on disability issues in the Federal government.

This month's call will feature Senior Advisor to President Obama, Valerie Jarrett, and Director of the White House Domestic Policy Council, Cecilia Muñoz. Both will also take questions.

Conference Call Information:

Date: Friday, August 24, 2012
Time: 2:00 p.m. EDT (dial in 5 minutes early)
Dial in: (800) 762-7308

Code: White House Disability Call

For live captioning, at the start time of the event, please login by clicking on the link below. Please only use this feature if you are deaf or hard of hearing.
http://www.fedrcc.us//Enter.aspx?EventID=1998026&CustomerID=321

This call is off the record and not for press purposes.

If you received this email as a forward but would like to be added to the White House Disability Group email distribution list, please visit our website at http://www.whitehouse.gov/disability-issues-contact and fill out the "contact us" form in the disabilities section, or you can send an email to: disability@who.eop.gov and provide your full name, city, state, and organization.

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CMS Open Door Forum: Seeking Input on ACO Educational Opportunities

The Center for Medicare and & Medicaid Innovation (CMS Innovation Center) is seeking input from interested stakeholders and the public on how educational opportunities for providers interested in participating in Accountable Care Organizations (ACOs) or other coordinated care initiatives could be designed.

On the call, CMS staff will provide a brief introduction and then open the phone lines for members of the public who wish to contribute to the dialogue.

Date: Monday, August 27, 2012
Time: 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. ET

No prior registration is necessary. Call the number below 5-10 minutes before the beginning of the Open Door Forum.

Phone Number: (866) 501-5502
Conference ID: 1602701

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Webinar on *Standing Together to Prevent Falls*

Falls are the leading cause of injury related deaths of older adults, the primary reason for older adult injury emergency department visits and the most common cause of hospital admissions for trauma. With the rapidly growing aging population in the United States, the issue of older adult falls will soon overwhelm our healthcare, public health and aging services systems.

September 22 is National Falls Prevention Awareness Day (FPAD). Join this webinar, sponsored by the National Council on Aging (NC0A), to discover how you can join the effort to affect this growing public health issue and sponsor an educational event in your community.

Date: Tuesday, August 28, 2012
Time: 3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. ET

To register, go to https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/952674577

Agenda:

- The issue of older adult falls in our country.
- Effective strategies for bringing greater awareness to older adult falls prevention and how you can participate in ***National Falls Prevention Awareness Day*** on September 22.
- The CDC's new STEADI (Stopping Elderly Accidents, Deaths and Injuries) toolkit for healthcare providers to assess falls risks, create action plans to reduce risk and link patients to community-based programs.
- Funding options, including Medicare coverage for falls and Title IIID falls prevention community program funding.

For more information on preparing for FPAD see the article below on Falls Prevention Awareness Day.

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Interactive Webinar on the Health Care Law

The HHS Partnership Center continues to host a series of interactive webinars discussing the benefits and provisions of the health care law, the Affordable Care Act.

This webinar is open to the public and includes a question and answer session where you can ask HHS staff any question you may have about the health care law. Please submit questions you would like to have answered on the webinar to ACA101@hhs.gov

To participate, click on the date below and submit the necessary information.

August 28, 2:00 pm ET – The Health Care Law 101 (in Spanish)

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Webinar on *Are You Ready? Readiness Assessment Guide for Your Agency's Volunteer Engagement*

Sponsored by the Aging Network's Volunteer Collaborative, this webinar will provide a walk-thru of readiness assessment tools for agencies looking to determine how ready they are to engage the "next generation" of volunteers.

The Aging Network needs to be ready to offer fulfilling opportunities that empower older adults and maximize their leadership skills and experiences to the benefit of us all.

Date: Wednesday, August 29, 2-12
Time: 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. EDT

To register, go to https://www4.gotomeeting.com/register/892096415

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AccessibilityOnline Webinar Series

AccessibilityOnline represents a collaborative training program between the ADA National Network and the US Access Board. The program includes a series of free webinars and audio conferences on different topics of accessibility. Sessions are held on a monthly basis and cover a variety of topics concerning accessibility to the built environment, information and communication technologies, and transportation. The training is coordinated and hosted by the Great Lakes ADA Center.

The September webinar will examine the use of interactive features, captioning, audio connections, and other features as it relates to those who are planning to provide webinars as well as those who are developing webinar platforms.

Date: Thursday, September 6, 2012
Time: 2:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. ET

To register, go to www.accessibilityonline.org.

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Regional Stakeholder Engagement Teleconference with CMS on Health Insurance Marketplace & Expanded Insurance Options

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) invite you to a regional teleconference with CMS staff to:

Update you on the latest information regarding implementation of the Health Insurance Marketplace (Exchanges), part of the Affordable Care Act.
Start discussing strategies to educate the uninsured, under-insured, and small businesses about expanded insurance coverage options.

Registration is required. Phone lines are limited. See the teleconference schedule below for call details and registration information. If you are unavailable on the date for your region, you may attend any of the other regional sessions.

Teleconference Schedule
**All times are expressed in Eastern Daylight Time (EDT)*

CMS Host Region/City	State	Teleconference Date and Time*	Registration information
I / Boston	Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island , and Vermont	Tuesday, September 11, 2012 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM EDT	Please register at http://cmsbostonhie.eventbrite.com
II / New York	New Jersey and New York	Thursday, September 13, 2012 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM EDT	Please register at http://cmsnewyorkhie.eventbrite.com
III / Philadelphia	Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, Pennsylvania , Virginia, and West Virginia	Thursday, September 13, 2012 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM EDT	Please register at http://cmsphiladelphiahie.eventbrite.com
IV / Atlanta	Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee	Wednesday, September 12, 2012 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM EDT	Please register at http://cmsatlantahie.eventbrite.com
V / Chicago	Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin	Thursday, September 6, 2012 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM EDT	Please register at http://cmschicagohie.eventbrite.com
VI / Dallas	Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas	Friday, September 14, 2012 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM EDT	Please register at http://cmsdallashie.eventbrite.com
VII / Kansas City	Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, and Nebraska	Wednesday, September 12, 2012 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM EDT	Please register at http://cmskansascityhie.eventbrite.com
VIII / Denver	Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming	Monday, September 10, 2012 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM EDT	Please register at http://cmsdenverhie.eventbrite.com

IX / San Francisco	Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada, and Pacific Territories	Friday, September 14, 2012 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM EDT	Please register at http://cmssanfranciscohie.eventbrite.com
X / Seattle	Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington	Friday, September 7, 2012 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM EDT	Please register at http://cmsseattlehie.eventbrite.com

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Tools & Information

Visit Disability.gov to Find Helpful Services & Programs in Your Community

Throughout the nation, millions of people live with a disability or know of someone who has one, whether a returning Veteran, family member, friend or colleague. Today, more than ever, there is a critical need to connect those with disabilities and aging Americans to the information they need to actively participate in their communities. Disability.gov (www.disability.gov) is the ideal, one-stop resource to meet that demand.

Managed by the US Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) in collaboration with 21 federal agency partners, Disability.gov streamlines more than 14,000 resources at the national, state and local levels. Comprehensive information is available on disability policies, programs and services, covering topics such as applying for benefits, getting health care, paying for housing and more. Visitors can also follow Disability.gov on Twitter or Facebook, read Disability.Blog or sign up for email alerts to receive timely updates on changes that may directly impact them.

We encourage you to visit the site and share this information with your colleagues, friends and family. For more information, please contact Communications Director Diana Zeitzer at disability@dol.gov.

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New CDC Recommendations on Hepatitis C for "Baby Boomers"

Last week the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) published "Recommendations for the Identification of Chronic Hepatitis C Virus Infection Among Persons Born During 1945–1965," new recommendations that call for all Americans born from 1945 through 1965 or "baby boomers" to get a one-time blood test for the hepatitis C virus (HCV).

In the United States, hepatitis C is the leading cause of liver transplants and primary liver cancer, which is the fastest-rising cause of cancer-related deaths. People born from 1945 through 1965 currently account for more than 75% of adults infected with hepatitis C in the U.S. and are five times more likely to be infected than other adults. Each year, more than 15,000 Americans, most of them baby boomers, die from hepatitis C-related illness, such as cirrhosis and liver cancer. Unfortunately, over the last decade, deaths have been increasing steadily. Without expanded access to HCV testing, care, and treatment, mortality among those living with HCV infection will continue to rise into the next decade.

New treatments are now available that can cure up to 75% of infections, and even more promising treatments are expected in the future. Linking individuals to appropriate care and treatment would prevent the costly consequences of liver cancer and other chronic liver diseases and ultimately save more than 120,000 lives. For more information, visit
http://www.cdc.gov/KnowMoreHepatitis/

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NASUAD to Offer Continuing Education Credits at the HCBS Conference and for Online Trainings

The National Association of State Units on Aging and Disability (NASUAD) is committed to strengthening the aging and disability networks capacity through continuing educational opportunities. Towards that effort, it is pleased to announce that social work continuing education units (CEUs) will be available at the HCBS Conference (September 11-13, 2012).

Licensed Social Workers may obtain up to 13 CEUs by attending sessions that have been approved by the National Association of Social Workers (NASW). The flat fee for CEUs for the entire conference is $85. Conference attendees will have the opportunity to register for CEU credit on-site, and will be required to sign an attendance sheet and complete an evaluation after each conference session. State licensure boards have final authority on the acceptance of individual courses so attendees should check with their state social work board if they are unsure whether the HCBS conference sessions will be accepted.

CEUs for social workers are also available for several of NASUAD's online courses at NASUAD IQ. To access the online trainings go to www.nasuadIQ.org. This will bring you to the full list of classes, ordered chronologically by when they were added. Scroll down to find the Courses that offer CEUs, indicated in red. You must log in to take the courses.

If you have already taken and passed the above courses, you must retake the quizzes. In order to obtain Social Work CEUs, then follow the instructions at the end of the quiz to complete the course evaluation and pay for the CEUs. NASUAD is charging $25 per CEU. Each of the courses is worth two CEUs, so they are $50/course.

Once logged in, you can access more detailed instructions for obtaining CEUs: http://nasuad.mrooms3.net/file.php/4/Social_Work_CEU_Instructional_Guide_PPT_NASUADIQ_org.pdf

Please contact Sara Tribe at stribe@nasuad.org or 202-898-2578 x305, with questions.

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I&R Training at HCBS

This is a reminder that the National Association of State Units on Aging and Disability (NASUAD) is offering a full day Certification for Information and Referral Specialists in Aging (CIRS-A) training again this year at the Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Conference. The training will be held on Tuesday, September 11, 10:30a-5:00p, which will give trainees the opportunity to attend the morning plenary session with Kathy Greenlee, Administrator for Community Living & Assistant Secretary for Aging. Continuing Education Units (CEUs) will be available for this session. Click here for more information on AIRS Certification.

To sign up for the CIRS-A Training, please contact Sara Tribe at stribe@nasuad.org or 202-898-2578 x305. I&R Training at HCBS

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Call for entries–ASA/MetLife Foundation MindAlert Awards Program

The American Society on Aging (ASA)-MetLife Foundation MindAlert Program has begun its annual call for MindAlert Awards.

Practitioners who work with older adults realize the benefits of cognitive fitness, and more and more programs to enhance brain health are being developed around the world. In an effort to support and recognize such programs, ASA has partnered with MetLife Foundation for the last 12 years to present the MindAlert program. This program consists of multiple components designed to introduce the newest findings in cognitive fitness and disseminate information on current research and innovative programs that help older adults maintain and improve cognitive and mental function in their later years.

Submissions will be accepted through October 15.

For details, go to http://www.asaging.org/mindalert-award

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New Video on Social Security: The Facts May Surprise You

Just in time for Social Security's 77th anniversary, the National Academy of Social Insurance (NASI) recently released an animated, 4-minute video that explains the basics about Social Security, including its purpose, who pays for it, who gets it, and what it means to seniors, working families, and children now and in the future.

The "Just the Facts" video is a tool for schools, colleges, community and religious organizations, and journalists to educate their students, communities, viewers and readers about Social Security and how it has performed over the years through good times and bad. NASI has also prepared a companion resources page at www.nasi.org/learn for viewers to further explore each topic discussed in the video.

View/share the video here: Social Security: Just the Facts

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GoDirect Check Insert Update for August

This month, all federal benefit check recipients received an insert with their monthly check that emphasized the need to make the switch to electronic payments by March 1, 2013.

All Social Security check recipients received an insert featuring customer service representatives from Treasury's Electronic Payment Solution Center with a message about representatives being available to help.

Those who get Supplemental Security Income, Veterans Compensation and Pension or other federal benefit payments received a straightforward message about the law requiring them to make the switch to an electronic payment.

Step-by-step instructions on how to make the switch to direct deposit or the Direct Express® Debit MasterCard® card are included on the back of the insert. When you talk with the people you serve, ask them if they received one of these inserts and urge them to switch to electronic payments ahead of the deadline.

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Recent Reports

Older Americans 2012: Key Indicators of Well-Being
http://www.agingstats.gov/agingstatsdotnet/main_site/default.aspx
Source: Federal Interagency Forum on Aging-Related Statistics.
Date: August 2012

Managing State-Level ACA Implementation Through Interagency Collaboration
http://www.rwjf.org/coverage/product.jsp?id=74733&cid=XEM_A6306
Source: Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
Date: July 2012

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