

U.S. House and Senate Notification
Friday, April 1, 2011

To: Congressional Health Staff

From: Amy Hall, Director, Office of Legislation
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

Re: CMS Awards 2011 Grant Funding to State Health Insurance Assistance Programs (SHIPs)

Today, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) announced the first installment of funding – nearly \$46.5 million – to State Health Insurance Assistance Programs (SHIPs) to help Medicare beneficiaries, and those who care for them, receive information and counseling about their health benefits and choices. These 2011 grants are available to 54 existing SHIP organizations in the United States and its territories.

The \$46.5 million will be available to SHIPs for the grant year starting April 1, 2011 and ending March 31, 2012 for direct grants and support contracts. For 2011, CMS updated performance measures to better evaluate the quality of SHIPs' services. In September, performance grants will be distributed to SHIPs based on their performance and accomplishments in the prior grant year.

CMS expects the SHIPs to use the FY 2011 funding to provide personalized, one-on-one counseling, information, education, and outreach to help people understand their Medicare benefits. The grant funding will also allow SHIPs to expand and develop new strategies to strengthen their community-based and grassroots networks. CMS will continue to support the SHIPs with training and technical assistance, helping to ensure that the community networks remain fully capable of accessing and using CMS' 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227), regional office resources, as well as the online tools at www.medicare.gov and www.SHIPtalk.org to provide assistance to Medicare beneficiaries.

The press release may be viewed at: http://www.cms.gov/apps/media/press_releases.asp.

If you have any questions about this announcement, please contact the CMS Office of Legislation. Thank you.