

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
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CENTERS FOR MEDICARE & MEDICAID SERVICES

DATE: August 6, 2021

TO: All Medicare Advantage, Prescription Drug Plan, and Cost Plan Organizations

FROM: Amy Larrick Chavez-Valdez Director,
Medicare Drug Benefit and C & D Data Group
Center for Medicare

SUBJECT: Participation Indicator for the State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP)
UniqueID Database

As part of the annual contractor application process, CMS extends to all Medicare Advantage (MA) organizations and Part D plan sponsors an opportunity to participate in the State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) *UniqueID* system. Since 2007, many plans have voluntarily participated in utilizing the database.

The *UniqueID* system allows SHIP Program Directors to assign unique IDs to SHIP counselors who have been trained on privacy policies and procedures, have signed a client confidentiality privacy statement, and understand that they are accountable for the protection of a beneficiary's personal information. The SHIP counselors are able to use the *UniqueID* system to obtain information from the customer service representatives at 1-800-MEDICARE, the CMS Coordination of Benefits contractor, and many plans to assist beneficiaries with claims-related issues and concerns.

To accurately identify those MA organizations and Part D sponsors that have chosen to participate in the SHIP *Unique ID* program and accept the SHIP *UniqueID* in order to assist customers, CMS has added the following “yes/no” question to the HPMS Basic Contract Management module: “Does this organization honor SHIP/SMP counselors Unique IDs to assist your customers?”

Organizations should complete this question in HPMS by **August 31, 2021**.

To access the question in HPMS, please follow this path: HPMS Home Page>Contract Management>Basic Contract Management>Enter Contract Number>Expand General Information>Org Marketing Data

For additional information on the SHIP *UniqueID*, please contact Gwendolyn Green at Gwendolyn.Green@cms.hhs.gov.