

4th Annual NCACDSS Best Practices Awards Nomination Form

Category: PCC#5 Tier 1 Profiles in Community Collaboration

Project Title: An Overdose of Medicare Prescription Drug Confusion could be Fatal

Please complete the criteria below in the space provided. Answer all questions completely to maximize your score.

Project/Program Summary: With the implementation of Medicare Part D drug coverage, N.C. Senior Care Program was scheduled to end as of 12/31/05. The enrollees of Senior Care had to decide how and whether to continue their prescription drug coverage after that date. Senior Care received grant funding to support efforts in transitioning these enrollees to Medicare Part D coverage. This transition was a daunting and complicated two-step process that challenged the capacity of even the most astute senior. The first step involved lower income seniors completing an 8-page application to qualify for federal assistance with the premiums, coinsurance and deductible amounts under Part D. The second step was actually selecting a Medicare approved prescription drug plan, a decision that involved choosing the best plan based on formulary, pharmacy network, and cost. Local Outreach Coordinators (LOCs) were responsible for ensuring that Senior Care enrollees in their county were educated and assisted in how to enroll.

Innovation: This process was unique as not only were the Senior Care recipients facing Medicare Part D, but the Medicaid recipients who were also Medicare eligible were impacted. Prior to this program, they were authorized to receive their prescriptions monthly with little or no formulary imposed. The decision was made to combine the efforts of the LOC of Senior Care to also direct the county Medicaid population with this difficult task. The Medicaid recipients who were eligible for Medicare Part D were automatically enrolled with a Prescription Drug Plan company. Not knowing what prescriptions they were on, it was impossible to link them with the best plan for them most of the time. Therefore, many Medicaid/Medicare eligibles had to be dis-enrolled with the assigned plan and enroll them with a more suitable one.

Project Effort and Difficulty: Macon County DSS was approved for a Local Outreach Coordinator grant of \$15,000.00. This included salary/wages/benefits, travel, communication costs, promotions, and other associated expenditures. We were able to hire on a part time basis a retired DSS employee with 33 years of experience who was housed at DSS. In coordinating our efforts with community partners there was no cost directly to the county. She started 9/19/05 and is still working part time until August 2006. The outreach plan included contacting 100% of the targeted Low Income Subsidy Senior Care enrollees and to hold or directly participate in 2 Low Income Subsidy group enrollment sessions per month thru 12/31/05. During this time 1,934 contacts were made. There were a total of 687 Low Income Subsidy Applications and 174 Prescription Drug Plan enrollments.

Project Success and Impact: We had the resources and interest of other entities who shared in achieving the goals. Included was The Area Agency on Aging, Seniors' Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP), Social Security, Senior Services, and the Medication Assistance Program. As our agency also served as the coordinator for the local Seniors' Health Insurance Information Program an abundance of information and publications were obtained from them. In conjunction with Social Security and SHIIP 23 Low Income Subsidy group enrollment sessions with 13 Prescription Drug Plan sign-up sessions were conducted. The local Social Security office also helped with outreach, not only locally but also held out of

town sessions. We worked with Senior Services in scheduling appointments for customers. When it was discovered that a Prescription Drug Plan would not cover all needed drugs, we worked with the Medication Assistance Program and RX Outreach to see if prescription assistance was available. We feel that the community collaboration gave the citizens of Macon County the best possible service.

The following graph charts the success of the program with respect to enrollment sessions for both Prescription Drug Plans and Low Income Subsidy applications.

Item	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	Totals	Goal
% LIS Senior Care Enrollees with Encounters	0%	0%	7%	16%	31%	35%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	94%	90%
Number of LIS Group Enrollment Sessions	0	0	2	2	7	2	1	2	2	2	3	NA	23	10
% LIS Target Eligibles Submitting LIS Application	0%	0%	7%	16%	31%	35%	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	0%	95%	90%
% Sr Care Enrollees with PDP Assist Encounters	NA	NA	NA	NA		5%	28%	11%	11%	13%	9%	4%	81%	90%
Number of PDP Selection Assistance Sessions	NA	NA	NA	NA		1	2	2	2	3	3	0	13	8
% Sr. Care Enrollees Submitting PDP Application	NA	NA	NA	NA			28%	11%	11%	13%	9%	4%	76%	80%
TOTALS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		

Ability to Replicate Project: Even though a small grant was received for the Local Outreach Coordinator position, the community collaboration was the essential element in the success of the program. The experiences gained by working with the Senior Center, Seniors' Health Insurance Information Program and the Medication Assistance Program has proven that this was not an individual project but involved many efforts in the success of this program. This experience can ensure that ongoing efforts will be utilized to best meet the needs of the Medicare/Medicaid population. Currently individuals who become eligible for these programs need assistance in applying for Low Income Subsidy and a Prescription Drug Plan. Open enrollment will be 11/15/06-12/31/06. Because of the success of the project, we will be readily prepared to assist individuals in the processes that once seemed insurmountable, hopefully without encountering or at least minimizing any fatalities along the way.