

# **Medicare Part D Open Enrollment Community Service**

## **Midwestern University Chicago College of Pharmacy**

### **Description & Overview**

Medicare Part D is a part of health care that is vital to the elderly. However, the complexity of Medicare eligibility, enrollment requirements, and various financial aid programs may be challenging for seniors to understand and to enroll. When taking into account the huge number and types of medications available, there is a needed educating seniors on selecting the most appropriate benefit plan. Thus, in the Fall of 2012, Midwestern University Chicago College of Pharmacy and Center for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) collaborated on a Medicare Part D open enrollment community service events at the Downers Grove, IL Town Center. Student Pharmacists were able to network with their fellow peers, conduct medication reviews, and work with regional pharmacists from CMS, who are experts in Medicare law and implementation.

### **Purpose**

The goal of the project is to provide student pharmacists the opportunity to work on presentation and clinical skills including taking medication histories, managing medication costs, and counseling. Pharmacy student pharmacists also learned the ins and outs of Medicare Part D as well as how to navigate the online Plan Finder tool on the medicare.gov website.

### **Budget: Expenses and Revenues**

There were two expenses recorded and no revenue gained. The local AMCP chapter covered all costs.

- Printing lecture materials for Medicare Part D training for pharmacy students
  - Total of \$6 (\$0.05 per page copy) – 120 pages
- Printing paper flyers for promotional purposes for the open enrollment event
  - Total of \$2.50 (\$0.05 per page copy) – 50 flyers

### **Who and How Many Chapter Members are Involved?**

This event requires the oversight of a 3-person committee and a 2-6 person implementation team. The three person committee for oversight (from the Executive Committee) were charged with planning and executing all the tasks under the project checklist section below. Assignments are divided in to three parts: (1) research on Medicare, (2) contact person for CMS & interested parties, and (3) coordinating promotional materials, paperwork, thank you cards/presents, and any miscellaneous duties.

### **Target Audiences: Who, Where, and How?**

The intended beneficiaries for this community service project are the elderly and minorities. Targeted audiences include people who are qualified for Medicare Part D especially those that may need support in navigating through the Medicare Part D website, or translating from English to another language.

Officials from CMS usually have connections to local town centers and can determine if there is a need for volunteers in certain communities. Local communities may also have groups dedicated to serving the elderly and providing services on Medicare enrollment such as: Agency on Aging, SHIP, senior centers, and retirement homes. These are all great starting points.

### **Materials Required**

- Computer lab for training
- Printer for printing flyers and lecture materials
- Meeting location/room with computers, tables, and chairs for enrollment event

### **Timeline**

Summer: chapter officers should establish/reestablish partnerships with regional CMS officials. With the help of CMS, the AMCP chapter will find local community centers that are interested in hosting this type of event.

Second Week of School: chapter officers attend a training session provided by a Medicare Part D specialist from CMS.

Second Week of School: The AMCP chapter will help local community groups promote the enrollment event. AMCP officers will also recruit and train student pharmacists who are interested in participating.

October – December: Host the Medicare Part D Open Enrollment Event. Open enrollment period is typically from October to December of each year.

### **Project Checklist: Step-by-Step**

- Contact regional CMS officials
- Find interested groups (community centers, retirement homes, physician offices)
- Select location and dates for Part D enrollment event
- Develop flyers for promotional purposes
- Chapter officers attend a training session by Medicare Part D representative
- Promote to AMCP chapter members and conduct training session
- Host Medicare Part D Open Enrollment Event
- Send thank you cards or emails to everyone who participated
- Post-event evaluation and suggestions for next year

## **Project Evaluation:**

### **Strengths**

- Met project goals in educating both the elderly and pharmacy students
- Expanded pharmacists' role in providing multidisciplinary benefits to the health system

### **Limitations**

- A low attendance participation, may require additional resources allocated into advertisement

### **What and How to improve for next year**

- Increase senior attendance
  - Set enrollment date right at the beginning of the open enrollment time
  - Pass out flyers at local fairs, super markets, etc.
  - Increase collaborations with local community groups that have a stronger need for volunteers
- Maximize the number of seniors to be helped
  - Utilize additional laptops/computers, and a larger meeting room
  - Include student pharmacists who can speak multiple languages