

SHICK Needs You!

Have you ever been confused about your Medicare options? If so, you're in good company. So many people are overwhelmed or confused about Medicare enrollment, benefits, coverage, appeals... For that very reason the Senior Health Insurance Counseling for Kansas (SHICK) program was developed over 20 years ago along with over 3,000 other programs nationwide. There are 10,000 people a day becoming Medicare eligible. Kansans turning 65 or experiencing disability and transitioning onto Medicare often experience first-hand the complicated Medicare system. SHICK programs can help Kansans understand Medicare and their options. Central Plains Area Agency on Aging's (CPAAA) SHICK program in partnership with the RSVP volunteer program are looking for interested volunteers to empower, educate and assist Medicare eligible individuals, families and caregivers to better understand Medicare.

CPAAA and partner organizations such as Sedgwick County Extension, local senior centers and local agencies offer SHICK counseling but there are more people needing assistance than ever before. CPAAA can utilize volunteers at our office, or in the community assisting a specific population such as a church, senior living facility, neighborhood group, etc. "It would be great if we all could take care of the people in our little part of the world", shared Celia Easley, Information and Outreach Specialist and SHICK Coordinator at CPAAA. SHICK is an important service that offers unbiased information to Medicare eligible individuals or current beneficiaries who are looking to revise their Medicare plans. "Placing volunteers at CPAAA and throughout the community will help us support them and improve Medicare understanding for more people when they need it." Volunteers may assist new Medicare enrollees; support Medicare beneficiaries during open enrollment for Part D (October 15-December 7) or throughout the year.

Craig, SHICK volunteer shared his experience. *"My mother-in-law was dropped from the corporate medical insurance she had for many years. She was disheartened and confused. I was able to help her select a Part D plan and a supplement plan. Through that experience--as well as my own--I realized how difficult it can be for many seniors to make an informed choice. I decided it was time to formalize my desire to help my fellow seniors work through the options and to become better trained. My experience as a first year SHICK counselor was worth all the energy I put into the training. I came away from every day of my counseling appointments with a feeling that I truly helped someone. I found the seniors I counseled to be very appreciative of our efforts on their behalf."*

CPAAA is looking for volunteers who have the ability to work with others, willingness to stay up-to-date with Medicare changes, familiarity with computers, good communications skills and strong organizational skills. Volunteer Medicare Counselors for Part C/D and comprehensive Medicare are needed as well as an office assistant. If you think this volunteer work is right for you contact Celia at 316-660-5132 or Celia.Easley@sedgwick.gov. All volunteers are well trained and supported through the training process and all volunteers 55+ will receive the benefits RSVP has to offer.

SHICK needs you and you may need SHICK: not only can this volunteer opportunity be very rewarding for those involved; volunteers will learn and have a better understanding of Medicare for themselves and for their loved ones. Other volunteer opportunities are available through RSVP volunteer program as well. For more information on SHICK or other volunteer openings contact CPAAA call center at 855-200-2372. CPAAA is here to support seniors, caregiver and persons with disabilities. For more information about these and other programs contact 1-855-200-2372 or visit www.cpaaa.org.