SHIIP Awards
Presented at Annual Coordinators’ Training Conference

Another successful Coordinators’ Training Conference allowed us the opportunity to recognize the outstanding achievements of SHIIP coordinators and volunteers throughout the state. Without the tireless efforts and dedication of these recipients and all our coordinators and volunteers, SHIIP would not be able to accomplish all it does from year to year.

The Mickey Hanula Volunteer of the Year award was presented to Barbara Brooks who counsels at the Cumberland County Coordinating Council on Older Adults in Fayetteville. She became a volunteer six years ago after retiring as Director of the Department of Social Services in her county. Her wealth of knowledge from her career and her compassion for others has made her an extremely valuable asset to her local SHIIP site.

Other outstanding nominees and regional award winners for the Mickey Hanula Volunteer of the Year were: Sylvia Hurley of Montgomery County; Carol Baxter from Mecklenburg County; Georgianna Bland from Caldwell County and JoAnne Powell from Hertford County.

The SHIIP Statewide Coordinator of the Year award was presented to Andrew Friend, the SHIIP coordinator at the Council on Aging in Union County. He has developed multiple partnerships and recruited multiple volunteers; he presented Extra Help programs at subsidized housing complexes and a senior nutrition site. Andrew also promotes SHIIP regularly through social media.
Q: I am going to be 65 soon but am still working and covered by my employer plan. I qualify for premium-free Part A, but do not want to take Part B yet. Should I enroll in Part B when I become eligible?

A: The answer to this question depends on your specific situation. Generally speaking, you can delay enrolling in Part B (and not enroll during your Initial Enrollment Period (IEP)) without incurring a late-enrollment penalty if you are still working or your spouse is still working and you have insurance from that work. Before delaying Part B enrollment, there are a few things you should consider.

The first is how and when you will sign up for Part B when your employer insurance ends. Because you are still working, you will be eligible for a Part B Special Enrollment Period (SEP). This enrollment period allows beneficiaries who delay Medicare enrollment while they are covered by their or their spouse’s current employer insurance to enroll later. You will not have to wait for the General Enrollment Period (GEP) that runs from January through March, and you will not have a penalty for delaying enrollment. Your SEP runs from now through eight months after the month in which you stop working, or your insurance ends, whichever comes first.

The next thing you should consider is how Medicare will work with your current employer insurance. When someone has Medicare and an employer group health plan, Medicare either pays first or second in coordination with the employer plan.

1. **Medicare pays secondary** to your current employer insurance if your company has 20 or more employees. This means that your employer insurance will pay first on health care claims, and then Medicare may pick up some or all of the remaining costs. If this is the case, you can delay Part B without creating a gap in coverage.

2. **Medicare pays primary** to your current employer insurance if your company has fewer than 20 employees. In this case, should sign up for Part B. If you delay Part B enrollment and continue to use your employer coverage as your primary insurance, you may run into problems. For example, your employer insurance may take back payments it made mistakenly as the primary insurance while you were Medicare-eligible.

If you decide to delay Part B enrollment you should call the Social Security Administration at 800-772-1213 or visit a local office to let them know. You should ensure you fully understand the consequences of delaying enrollment. Keep a record of your conversation with the Social Security staff. You should also keep record of your employer coverage for the time you are covered because you will need this information when you sign up for Part B at a later time.

Delaying Part B enrollment involves making sure you can enroll in Part B later without a penalty or gap in coverage. You should also make sure your current insurance will continue to provide adequate coverage. It is important to consider your situation carefully before delaying enrollment in Part B.

Q: I have retiree insurance from my previous job, and I will be turning 65 in a few months. Do I have to sign up for Medicare even though I already have coverage?

A: If you have retiree insurance, it is a good idea to sign up for Medicare when you become eligible. According to Medicare rules, retiree insurance pays secondary to Medicare. This means that Medicare pays first for your health care, and then your retiree coverage pays for some or all of the costs that Medicare did not cover. If you do not sign up for Medicare, you may have problems accessing coverage. There are a few things to consider.

First, if you become eligible for Medicare and don’t sign up, your retiree policy may not cover you. Many retiree policies require you to sign up for Medicare Part A (hospital insurance) and Part B (medical insurance) and may not make payment until Medicare does. If your retiree policy does cover your health care costs, it may later recoup payments it made when Medicare was supposed to pay primary.

Another consequence of not signing up for Medicare is the possibility of a late enrollment penalty (LEP). An individual can be subject to an LEP if they do not sign up for Medicare when they are first eligible to do so. You can avoid a late enrollment penalty by signing up for Medicare three months before or up to three months after you turn 65.

Note that some retiree policies provide creditable prescription drug coverage. Creditable coverage means that your coverage is as good as or better than Medicare Part D prescription drug coverage. If you have creditable drug coverage through your retiree plan, you can choose not to sign up for a Part D plan and not face a late enrollment penalty later should you lose your retiree coverage and decide to enroll in a Part D plan.

The takeaway point is that you should sign up for Medicare Part A and Part B when you are first eligible. Check with your former employer to find out if you have creditable drug coverage before deciding whether to sign up for a Part D plan.
Hello Friends,

I hope this message finds you well and you have enjoyed a relaxing summer with plenty of time for vacation. The one thing on many of our minds has been concern about funding of the national SHIIP program. While concerns persist, we won’t have resolution for a couple more months. As you may remember, the U.S. Senate voted to cut all SHIIP funding but the House of Representatives voted to maintain it. Congress called a recess before a compromise agreement could be reached. The Senate and the House will return for a short period before November elections. Insiders in Washington feel that Congress will do a Continuing Resolution that will carry the funding at its current level until sometime next year. Thank you to all of you who wrote, emailed, or called your Congressmen and voiced your concerns over the proposed funding cuts.

While we have experienced some growing pains during implementation of Docusign, I think this endeavor will be faster and more accurate after we all get acclimated. We ask for your continued patience as we all adjust to this new way of doing things.

I hope those of you who attended the 2016 Coordinators’ Conference felt it was worth your time. We received mostly positive feedback from the conference and I wish I could have been there. Unfortunately, I was scheduled to attend the National SHIIP/SMP conference that same week. We are going to move the state conference to the dates we’ve used in previous years to avoid conflict between the two conferences next year.

As we wind up the lazy days of summer, the busy fall season and annual Open Enrollment Period (OEP) is just around the corner. Lisa Zimmerman and Suraka Saunders, our Call Center Managers, have been working with other Department of Insurance staff in order to get them trained for OEP. We will work to continue streamlining the process this year. As in the past, when all of your counseling slots are booked, please refer your consumers to us here in Raleigh.

And lastly, I want to bid a sincere farewell to Judy Gray. Judy is retiring after 30 years with the Department of Insurance and 18 years with SHIIP. Judy has served as the Statewide Volunteer Manager and has been the force behind making sure we have the best volunteer team in the country. She has not only enjoyed working with the volunteers and coordinators, but has made lasting friendships that she will carry with her. Please join me in wishing Judy a very happy and fulfilling retirement. She WILL return to be a volunteer.

Until next time, Happy Counseling.

The NC Department of Insurance presented a special award to Hal Taylor for his service to Medicare beneficiaries in Carteret County. Harold ‘Hal’ Taylor has been a volunteer counselor for SHIIP for more than 15 years. During his time with SHIIP he counseled thousands of Medicare beneficiaries and caregivers and served as the Carteret County Volunteer Coordinator. He educated numerous people throughout his tenure and faithfully attended quarterly training meetings. SHIIP reluctantly watches him sail off after 15 years of service.

Thank you, Hal, for your tireless efforts on behalf of so many North Carolina citizens.
The other nominees and regional award winners for Coordinator of the Year were: Janice Holmes of Lee County; Denise Cross of Cherokee County; Ana Lima of Orange County; and Lisa Barker from Wayne County.

The Jim Long Outstanding SHIIP Service Award was awarded to two very deserving recipients this year: Roberta Hamby and Judy Gray.

The Jim Long Award was established in 2008 to honor and recognize a SHIIP volunteer, SHIIP Coordinator, or any individual or organization that has made a significant contribution to the education, counseling and assistance of health issues to Medicare beneficiaries in North Carolina.

Roberta Hamby, Healthcare Product Manager with the State Health Plan, is a strong supporter and advocate for SHIIP and has been instrumental in the enhancement of the strong partnership SHIIP shares with the State Health Plan and its members. As a former SHIIP staff member, Roberta continues to carry the SHIIP message in her current position to the retirees of state government.

The second recipient, Judy Gray, is a long-time NCDOI employee and current SHIIP Statewide Volunteer Manager. Judy has been a SHIIP volunteer since the program began in 1986. Her compassion for senior adults has been fostered through community support and her years of service to SHIIP and the Medicare beneficiaries in North Carolina.

The SHIIP Statewide County of the Year award was presented to Burke County. Under the leadership of Amanda Clarke, SHIIP volunteers at Burke County Senior Services provided counseling to 1,252 clients this year, which was nearly triple the number counseled in the previous year. This coordinating site has embraced its duties by searching for ways to enhance its SHIIP services including outreach to a dialysis clinic and consistently broadcasting PSAs with local media.

Other nominees and regional award winners for County of the Year were: Granville County, Randolph County, Stanly County and Greene County.
Congratulations! to our recent online training graduates!

Alamance County
Gwendolyn Torain
Deborah “ Deb” Krysa
Charlotte Pardini

Beaufort County
Arden Root

Brunswick County
Eileen Scanlon

Brunswick County
Lance Goller
Gayland Welborn
Judy Handley
Mary Buttitia
Margaret Callahan
Marissa Rogoff
Sharon Miall

Catawb County
Diana Starkey

Carteret County
Mary Dixon
Cindy Blizzard
Mary Kurek
Shirley Johnson
Carol Murray Neglic
Glenda McDowell

Catawba County
Adria Cline

Chatham County
Paul Bolig
John Sullivan

Craven County
Sophia Sterling
Ginger Sims

Cumberland County
Mary Ford
Jennifer Ditmore
Julia McLellam
Tonya Dandeneau

Durham County
Adam Bernstein
Gretchen Cooley
Joan "Joanie" Richards
Elizabeth Hammett
Loretta "Laurie" McNeil
Lori Armistead
Phillip Richards
Emoni Battle
LaKeisha Wilson

Forsyth County
Deborah Marcus
Jeannette Colon

Graham County
Bonnie Dodson

Guilford County
Robert Platt

Halifax County
Marjorie Bailey

Haywood County
Karen Sidle

Henderson County
Thomas Deyerle, II

Iredell County
Georgia Richards
Joanne Lischin

Jackson County
Ella Enslcy

Lincoln County
George Groninger

Martin County
Jessica Godard

McDowell County
Lesa Silver

Mecklenburg County
Ann Prock
David Isaacs
Dennis Lazarus
Kirrene Donaldson
Leah Amler
Gertrude Tucker
Joal Fischer
Angela Niblett-Bethel
Judith Walsh
Cheryl Heedick
Xavier Curry
Myrtle Cowen
Wu “Grace” Yin
Paul “Dan” Woodall
David Critchlow

New Hanover County
Wayne Pearce
Annette Compton

Orange County
Kendra Scott
Robert “ Bob” Locke

Pender County
Candice Schaeffer
Patricia Boyd

Pitt County
Elizabeth Whitley
Rachel Balasco
Janeigha Boyd
Cheryl Hallock
Linda McGehee

Randolph County
Melissa Thomson

Robeson County
Ursula Selles
Rachell Hodnett

Rockingham County
John Heinrich
Christine Heinrich

Rowan County
David Hall

Rutherford County
Kathy Kring
Amy Mills
Tyrrell County
Erielle Cooper

Union County
Kathleen Domanski
Claudette Bonham
John “Hank” Gamber

Vance County
Katherine Conner

Wake County
Ritu Kaur
William Hardiman
Houston Davis (SHIIP)
Jennifer Murray
Rae Vermeal
Lucy Mauriello
Kathryn Crayton
Otis “Lamar” Bishop
Susan Birchfield

Warren County
Sharon Speed

Wilson County
Brittany Robinson

Yadkin County
Terry Schrader
SHIIP attended the World Elder Abuse Awareness Day open house at NC DHHS Division on Aging and Adult Services. SHIIP/SMP have been strong partners in this initiative for many years and Kevin Robertson currently serves on the board for NC Partnership to Address Adult Abuse.

Wilkes County Coordinator, Rick Cook, honored his volunteers at a volunteer appreciation and recognition event to say thank you for their contribution as SHIIP volunteers. The volunteers enjoyed ice cream, flowers, balloons and a gift card to Cracker Barrel.

Randolph County Senior Adults held their SHIIP Volunteer Appreciation and Recognition Luncheon on June 6, 2016, at CJ’s Olde Towne Restaurant in Asheboro.

Caswell County SHIIP volunteers were treated to lunch at the Caswell Pines Golf Course in appreciation for their service to SHIIP at the Caswell County Senior Services. Jeannine Everidge and Desiree Benson, Caswell County Coordinators, presented each volunteer with a tote bag filled with chocolate!

SHIIP Staffers Diane Trainor and Catherine Fannon, along with volunteer Terri Bradley, represented SHIIP at the 2016 Senior Celebration in Cherokee, NC with the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians.