Aging Matters

United Way Area Agency on Aging of Jefferson County

MATTERS OF INTEREST TO SENIORS IN JEFFFERSON COUNTY

March 2019

Be on the Lookout for Medicare Scams! Senior Medicare Patrol Is Here to Help.

It's estimated that the Medicare program *and* Medicare beneficiaries nationwide lose between $60 and $90 billion each year to healthcare fraud and scams. People in Jefferson County are no exception. Unscrupulous individuals are always looking for ways to take advantage of others.

SMP Empowering Seniors To Prevent Healthcare Fraud

But United Way's Area Agency on Aging (UWAAA) has implemented a new program to spread the word about Medicare scams and deceptive business practices, and teach consumers how to spot them and avoid becoming victims. The program is called **Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP)** and is part of a national network of volunteer and community outreach efforts dedicated to empowering seniors to prevent healthcare fraud.

Our SMP staff and volunteers (who we are actively recruiting) work with individuals to review their Medicare Summary Notices for accuracy, make presentations to groups, exhibit at community health fairs, and serve as advocates to local, state and federal officials.

The primary goal, however, is to teach **Medicare** beneficiaries how to protect their personal identity, recognize and report errors on healthcare bills and identify deceptive healthcare practices, such as illegal marketing, providing unnecessary services and charging for services that were never provided. You can learn more about SMP by clicking here, visiting smpresource.org or calling **1-800-AGE-LINE** (1-800-243-5463).

Volunteer Opportunity

Want to play a part in stamping out Medicare fraud? UWAAA's Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) needs you.

As a grass-roots program, **SMP** depends on trained volunteers going out into the community to inform and educate seniors about identity theft and the types of ploys used to defraud the Medicare system and its rightful beneficiaries.

You might also be interested in volunteering for **SHIP** (UWAAA's State Health Insurance Assistance Program), which provides assistance to seniors in understanding, and signing up for, the Medicare benefits that best meet their individual needs.

In either case, we'll provide all the free training you need. Learn more about how you can help with these and other volunteer opportunities by calling **1-800-AGE-LINE** (1-800-243-5463) or email volunteer@uwca.org.

Take a Minute for Medicare

Taking time to learn about how Medicare works can make a huge difference in how well it works *for you*. Sometimes, that's simply a matter of knowing when you can enroll for benefits or make changes to the plan you already have.

There are specific rules and timing for your Initial Enrollment Period, Special Enrollment Period, General Enrollment Period and Open Enrollment. Get the details in our **"Medicare Minute"** by clicking here. Or call our SHIP specialist at **1-800-AGE-LINE** (1-800-243-5463).

Save the Date to Celebrate!

Last year's **Senior Celebration** attracted more than 600 participants and was a rousing success. So we're doing it again, and this one promises to be even better. In connection with Older Americans Month, we'll be gathering on **Thursday, May 9th at Boutwell Auditorium** for fun, fellowship and festivities. Mark your calendar now and make plans to join us. Details will follow soon. You can also check our website for updates at uwaaa.org.

OLDER AMERICANS MONTH

CONNECT, CREATE, CONTRIBUTE MAY 2019

Number Crunching

Numbers help tell UWAAA's story of providing vital programs and services to seniors and disabled individuals in Jefferson County. The following figures represent inquiries and needs fulfilled through key programs.

UWAAA Impact from December 2018 through January 2019:

- ADRC: 1,204 Calls
- Alabama Cares: 203 Calls
- Homemaker/Personal Care Program: 89 Calls
- Legal Assistance: 259 Calls
- Ombudsman: 16 Cases; 38 Visits
- Preventative Health: 193 Calls
- Senior Nutrition: 1,853 Clients Served; 27,003 Meals Provided
- SenioRx: 66 Calls
- SHIP: 397 Calls

Upcoming Events

Be sure to mark your calendar for these events and contact UWAAA at **1-800-AGE-LINE** for additional details. We look forward to seeing you!

Senior Celebration: Thursday, May 9th, Boutwell Auditorium in Birmingham. Details to come.

Caregiver Support Group: UWAAA's Alabama Cares program offers assistance in coping with the challenges of caregiving. Open to all caregivers of a relative, partner or friend.

Third Tuesday of each month, 11 a.m. to Noon
United Way of Central Alabama 3600 8th Avenue South Birmingham, AL 35222

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Support Group: UWAAA's Alabama Cares program offers assistance in coping with the challenges of raising grandchildren.

Third Wednesday of each month, 11 a.m. to Noon
United Way of Central Alabama 3600 8th Avenue South Birmingham, AL 35222

Aging Matters is produced by United Way Area Agency on Aging, which provides services and programs to meet the challenges faced by older adults and disabled citizens in Jefferson County. For additional information, call 1-800-AGE-LINE (243-5463) or visit uwaaa.org.

TO SUBSCRIBE TO THE AAA EMAIL LIST, CLICK HERE. TO BE REMOVED FROM THE MAILING LIST, CLICK HERE AND WE'LL SEND YOU A CONFIRMATION EMAIL BEFORE REMOVING YOUR NAME.