



# State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP)

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# State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) -- Overview

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- Established under OBRA 1990
- Purpose--
  - To support a community-based network of programs providing personalized counseling to people who want or need more intensive services than are provided through national education and assistance efforts



# State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) -- Overview

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- CMS grant funded programs to states
  - State governors appoint lead agency—currently 1/3 in Insurance Departments, 2/3 in Administrations on Aging
  - States distribute funding to local programs
- 54 funded programs--50 states plus the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam and the Virgin Islands
- 1,300 local sponsoring organizations
- 12,000 counselors, primarily volunteers



# State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) -- What SHIPs do

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- One-on-one, personalized counseling on Medicare benefits and services and other insurance related issues, at the local level
- Community outreach, information, and education
- Referral to other programs and services



# The Value of SHIPs

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- Provide informed, comprehensive, objective, and timely information on Medicare benefits and services and related health insurance issues.
- Are a trusted local source of information for beneficiaries, their caregivers and partners regarding Medicare health plan options.
- Serve as an early warning system to CMS on problems or issues in the field (plan issues, plan finder issues, marketing issues, employer issues)

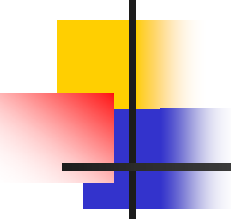


# State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) -- Utilization

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In FY 2008:

- Provided approximately 1.6 million individual client counseling contacts.
- Reached approximately 4.8 million persons through outreach events and one-on-one counseling sessions.
- Conducted approximately 52,000 public information and outreach events.



# State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) -- Funding

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- Funding has steadily increased from \$12.5 M in FY 2003 to \$45M in FY 2010.



# CMS' Expectations of SHIPs

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- Access to SHIP services provided to beneficiaries statewide
- Access to SHIP services at the local level
- Access to services by hard-to-reach populations
- One-on-one counseling to beneficiaries
- A well-trained workforce
- Accurate and timely information provided to beneficiaries
- State and local participation in CMS education and communication activities



# How CMS Trains and Communicates with SHIPs

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- SHIP Grant Announcement, Performance Reports, and Mid-Term Reviews
- Monthly SHIP Forum Calls
- New SHIP Director Training
- Annual SHIP Directors' Conference
- SHIP Directors' Conference Calls
- CMS Mailbox – [SHIP@cms.hhs.gov](mailto:SHIP@cms.hhs.gov)
- SHIP Resource Center
- SHIP Website – [www.SHIPTalk.org](http://www.SHIPTalk.org)



# How CMS Trains and Communicates with SHIPs

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- Weekly e-newsletter –*SHIP Navigator* (to subscribe to <http://www.meetinglink.org/ship/subscribe.htm>)
- CMS Regional Office Staff – Bi-weekly
- SHIP Director Conversations with CMS Central Office Staff—Ongoing
- Daily e-mails – Listservs
- Webinars
- Links to CMS Websites
- National Medicare Training Program



# How SHIPs Can Be of Help To Employers

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- Provide assistance at retirement seminars
- Coordinate activities with Departments of Human Resources
- Participate in employer fairs



# How Employers Can Support SHIPs

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- Provide early warning if benefits are changing or plans will be dropped.
- Request information/training on Medicare benefits and services.
- Promote volunteerism at the local SHIP.



# Interested in Becoming a SHIP Volunteer?

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- Contact the SHIP Director in your state by going to [www.shiptalk.org](http://www.shiptalk.org) (click on find a State SHIP)