

From: NCOA Center for Benefits Access <centerforbenefits@ncoa.org>

To: Kester, Tonykester@aging.sc.gov

Date: 12/16/2015 2:09:57 PM

Subject: 5 Top Benefits News Stories of 2015

Email not displaying correctly?
View it in your browser.

5 Top Benefits News Stories of 2015

This year brought plenty of good news for benefits counselors and programs, from increased MIPPA funding to more seniors accessing food assistance.

[Learn more](#)

Dec. 16, 2015

Webinar: Finding Medicare answers when you need them

Want to learn how to get the answer to a tricky question about Medicare or a benefit? Join us for a webinar on Jan. 22 when we'll walk through the different authority resources on Medicare, and where you can turn for guidance before contacting an "expert."

[Register](#)

Seniors' access to benefits preserved in budget package

Nearly three months into the new fiscal year, Congress is expected to finally pass the FY16 "omnibus," which contains each of the 12 annual appropriations bills. Many cuts proposed earlier this year were ultimately rejected. Therefore, State Health Insurance Assistance Programs (SHIPs) will be level-funded at \$52.1 million, and the Low-Income

Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) will remain at \$3.4 billion. To provide enough time for Congress to vote and the President to sign the measure, another continuing resolution (CR) will keep the government open through Dec. 22 or until the omnibus is enacted.

[Review the numbers](#)

Two new tip sheets highlight promising outreach strategies

The National Association of States United for Aging and Disability (NASUAD) has developed two new tip sheets that highlight promising strategies for increasing enrollment into the Part D Low Income Subsidy and Medicare Savings Programs. The first showcases how one Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) increased awareness of and screening for these programs among all staff; the second highlights creative partnerships for reaching more beneficiaries.

[Download the tip sheets](#)

Congrats & happy holidays from the Center for Benefits!

This year, Benefits Enrollment Centers and Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act (MIPPA) grantees have helped nearly 200,000 low-income people with Medicare apply for over \$570 million in benefits. Together we are helping to achieve NCOA's goal of improving the lives of 10 million older adults by 2020. We applaud all of your hard work, and wish you and your loved ones a relaxing and very happy holiday season!

Did you miss this?

- **Medicare and Advance Care Planning:** Learn more about Medicare's coverage of this service beginning Jan. 1 in our new fact sheet.
- **Beware of Scams Targeting Older Adults During the Holidays:** Share these tips from the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau to help seniors beware of financial exploitation.
- **Long-Term Benefits of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program:** Read this new report from the White House that shares the positive impacts SNAP has on low-income households.

© 2015 [National Council on Aging](#), Inc. All rights reserved. Unauthorized use prohibited. May not be reproduced in whole or in part by persons, organizations, or corporations other than NCOA, its affiliates, divisions, and units without the prior written permission of an authorized officer of NCOA. For permission, please contact newsletters@ncoa.org.

[Manage Email Preferences](#)

NCOA | 251 18th Street South | Suite 500 | Arlington, VA 22202