

**State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations**



**Department of Human Services  
Division of Elderly Affairs**

**RHODE ISLAND SENIOR BEAT**

**BY:** Larry Grimaldi, Chief of Information & Public Relations  
462-0509 lgrimaldi@dea.ri.gov

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**MEDICARE OPEN ENROLLMENT BEGINS OCTOBER 15.**  
**DEA ANNOUNCES OPEN ENROLLMENT EVENTS**

**CRANSTON---** By now, Medicare beneficiaries have received their *2014 Medicare and You* handbooks, the annual notice of change from their current insurance carriers, and countless pieces of mail from companies that offer Medicare Advantage and Medicare supplement insurance plans. That can only mean that the Medicare open enrollment period is about to begin. It's time to gather your health care information, make a list of your prescriptions drugs, and take an inventory of your health care needs. The annual Medicare open enrollment period begins on October 15 and runs through December 7.

Medicare open enrollment gives beneficiaries the chance to look at Medicare health plans and prescription drug plan (Medicare Part D) options to help them select the most beneficial coverage options for their health care dollar. Perhaps your medications have changed, medications may have been added, or you no longer take the same prescription drugs you did last year. Perhaps you have been diagnosed with a new medical condition that requires specific treatment or new medications.

Even if your health care needs are the same as last year, open enrollment is the time to take a look at available Medicare health and Part D plans. Now is the time to assess your health care needs and make changes, if necessary. If you enroll in a new health insurance or Part D plan, your new coverage will begin on January 1, 2014.

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**John O. Pastore Center, Hazard Building / 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor**  
**74 West Road, Cranston, RI 02920**  
**Telephone 401-462-3000, Fax 401-462-0503, TTY 401-462-0740**  
**Web Site: [www.dea.ri.gov](http://www.dea.ri.gov)**

## **Medicare open enrollment events-add one**

Rhode Island Medicare beneficiaries have a choice of many Medicare Advantage plan options, Medicare supplement insurance plans and more than two dozen Part D plans. How do they select plans that suit their unique needs? The good news is that they do not have to navigate the sea of choices on their own. There is help.

The Rhode Island Division of Elderly Affairs (DEA) will join with its community partners to sponsor more than 40 events across the state during the annual Medicare open enrollment period. Trained Senior Health Insurance Program (SHIP) counselors will be available at all open enrollment events to offer free, confidential individual counseling to help beneficiaries identify options for the most cost-effective and comprehensive Medicare health plan and Part D coverage.

Counseling appointments are required at open enrollment events. To schedule a SHIP counseling session, call the local event site directly. Beneficiaries must bring their Medicare card (red, white and blue card), insurance cards (both health insurance and Part D), and a list of their medications including the correct dosages and frequency, to their counseling appointment. Beneficiaries should also take a few moments to review their *Medicare and You 2014* handbook. If you are unable to attend an open enrollment event, you can still schedule a SHIP counseling session at your local SHIP agency throughout the open enrollment period.

The full open enrollment event schedule is available by calling DEA at 462-3000, or by going to [www.dea.ri.gov](http://www.dea.ri.gov). TTY users can call 462-0740. The schedule is also available by calling THE POINT, Rhode Island's Aging and Disability Resource Center, at 462-4444. TTY users can call 462-4445.

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The Rhode Island Department of Human Services, Division of Elderly Affairs (DEA) is responsible for the development and implementation of a comprehensive system of programs and services for Rhode Islanders ages 60 and older and for adults with disabilities. Questions or requests for additional information on the issues of growing older in Rhode Island should be directed to: Larry Grimaldi, Rhode Island Senior Beat, Rhode Island Department of Human Services, Division of Elderly Affairs, 74 West Road, Cranston, RI 02920 or faxed to 462-0503. Information may also be requested via e-mail at [lgrimaldi@dea.ri.gov](mailto:lgrimaldi@dea.ri.gov).