

# MEDICARE MATTERS

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## MEDICARE 2003 NATIONAL MULTI-MEDIA CAMPAIGN



The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) will launch the multi-media element of its national education campaign during the first week in November. The multi-media campaign will reinforce Medicare as an important source for health care information.

The core campaign goals are to build awareness of **1-800-MEDICARE** as an official information source and to get beneficiaries and caregivers to call **1-800-MEDICARE** with their questions about Medicare. The general market campaign will consist of national television and Internet advertising. The campaign will also include Spanish language national television, radio, print, and Internet advertising. A publicity/promotion campaign will be implemented to leverage the national advertising efforts to promote **1-800-MEDICARE**.

The **1-800-MEDICARE** general market television spot will air in two test markets from late September through early October. Based on feedback from the market test, we will make any necessary changes to the advertisement prior to national implementation. The national multi-media education campaign will run this Fall for the **1-800-MEDICARE** message and extend into 2004 with plans to promote a potential Medicare drug discount card, pending legislative passage.

## DHHS QUALITY INITIATIVE



Quality health care for people with Medicare is a high priority for President Bush, the Department of Health and Human Services, and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). We are committed to assuring quality health care for all Americans. Under Secretary Thompson's leadership, CMS has developed the **Quality Initiative**. The initiative aims to (a) empower consumers with quality of care information to make more informed decisions about their health care, and (b) stimulate and support providers and clinicians to improve the quality of health care they provide. The **Quality Initiative** was launched nationally in November 2002 for nursing homes (the Nursing Home Quality Initiative) and will be expanded in 2003 to the nation's home health care agencies (the Home Health Quality Initiative) and hospitals (the Hospital Quality Initiative).

Through the quality improvement efforts, consumers have access to expanded health care quality performance information available at the CMS consumer web site, **www.medicare.gov**. Consumers can use the quality information to be better informed when making important health care decisions about nursing homes, home health agencies, and hospitals.

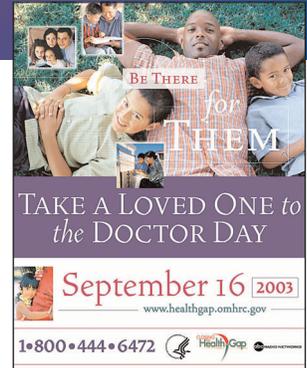
As part of the initiative, **Medicare's Quality Improvement Organizations (QIOs)** provide assistance to consumers in helping them better use the quality information, as well as work with local nursing homes, home health agencies, and hospitals to improve the quality of care.

For more information on the **Quality Initiative**, visit **www.cms.hhs.gov/quality/**.

## TAKE A LOVED ONE TO THE DOCTOR DAY

*"Take A Loved One to the Doctor Day"* is an opportunity to take initiative in your community to address racial and ethnic disparities in health. It is part of the **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Closing the Health Gap** information and education campaign, which focuses on major areas in which racial and ethnic minorities experience serious disparities in health access and outcomes, some of which include diabetes; heart disease and stroke; cancer; infant mortality; child and adult immunization; and HIV/AIDS.

Regular health care, including preventive care, can enhance and extend the lives of the individuals living in your community. By using *"Take A Loved One to the Doctor Day"* as a launching point, you can play an essential role in encouraging people to visit a health professional—or at least make an appointment to visit one. For more information on **Closing the Health Gap** and minority health information, visit [www.healthgap.omhrc.gov/](http://www.healthgap.omhrc.gov/) or call **1-800-444-6472**.



## SEPTEMBER IS NATIONAL FLU/PNEUMONIA MONTH



Each year CMS conducts a consumer information campaign to make people with Medicare aware that Medicare Part B covers influenza immunizations. In addition, the campaign actively promotes

the use of the pneumococcal vaccination among beneficiaries (covered since 1981).

CMS, with its national partners, design and implement culturally sensitive and appropriate interventions to address those areas of need, with the ultimate goal being to increase the rate of immunizations among the Medicare population.

For more information on our **Influenza/Pneumococcal Campaign**, visit [www.cms.hhs.gov/preventiveservices](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/preventiveservices).

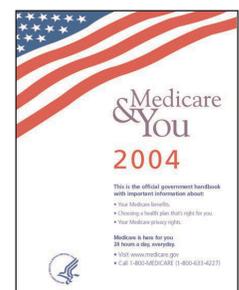
## OCTOBER IS NATIONAL BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

The **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services' (CMS)** national effort works to educate women about breast cancer screening and Medicare's annual screening mammography benefit. Physicians and other clinicians are also targeted to improve their recommendation of breast cancer screening. More information about the **National Medicare Mammography Campaign**, including a six issue/year internet-based newsletter, *"Not Just Once,"* can be found on the web at [www.cms.gov/preventiveservices/1a.asp](http://www.cms.gov/preventiveservices/1a.asp).



## 2004 HANDBOOK MAILING

The area-specific versions of *Medicare & You 2004* will be mailed to 50% of beneficiary households on October 24, and the remaining 50% on October 31. Copies for partners who pre-ordered *Medicare & You 2004* will be shipped on October 15. The national version will be available for order after October 10, 2003. Call **1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227)** to request up to 25 copies, or fax an order to **410-786-1905** for more than 25 copies.



## SEPTEMBER IS THE TIME TO PREPARE TO FIGHT THE FLU



### COVERAGE CLIPBOARD

During the flu season, CMS issues educational material to assist professionals and information intermediaries with their questions about Medicare coverage for immunizations. The *2003-04 Immunizers' Question & Answer Guide to Medicare Coverage of Influenza and Pneumococcal Vaccinations* includes information on the vaccination benefit, immunization guidelines, coverage policy, payment policy, mass immunization, centralized billing, and managed care. CMS also provides **Step-by-Step Instructions** and a **Video** explaining how to bill Medicare (roster or provider) for these vaccinations. For more information and to access these materials, please visit [www.cms.hhs.gov/preventiveservices](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/preventiveservices).

### COVERAGE CRITERIA

#### Q. WHAT ARE MEDICARE'S COVERAGE CRITERIA FOR FLU VACCINATIONS?

**A.** Effective for services performed on or after May 1, 1993, Medicare will pay for flu virus vaccines and their administration. Generally, only one flu virus vaccination is medically necessary per year. Medicare beneficiaries may receive the vaccine once each flu season without a physician's order and without the supervision of a physician. However, state laws regarding who can administer vaccines still apply. The Medicare Part B deductible and coinsurance do not apply. Additional vaccination may be covered if medically necessary.

#### Q. WHAT ARE MEDICARE'S COVERAGE CRITERIA FOR PNEUMOCOCCAL POLYSACCHARIDE VACCINE (PPV) VACCINATIONS?

**A.** Effective for services performed on or after July 1, 1981, Medicare began paying for PPV and its administration. Typically, this vaccine is administered once in a lifetime except for persons at highest risk.

Effective for claims with dates of service on or after July 1, 2000, Medicare no longer requires the PPV to be ordered by a doctor of medicine or osteopathy. However, state laws regarding who can administer vaccines still apply. Therefore, the beneficiary may receive the vaccine upon request without physician's supervision. However, state laws regarding who can administer vaccines still apply.

Medicare will only cover an initial vaccine administered to persons at high risk of pneumococcal disease. Considered at high risk are persons 65 years of age or older and immunocompetent adults who are at increased risk of pneumococcal disease or its complications because of chronic illness.



## NATIONAL MEDICARE TRAINING

Did you know that CMS offers a no-cost **National Medicare Training Course**? The online course is designed for independent study, and will enhance your knowledge of the Medicare Program as it relates to beneficiaries. The classroom materials used in the national *Train-the-Trainer* workshops can be downloaded and/or printed from this site.

These materials include PowerPoint presentations (with speakers' notes), handouts, and related activities. To access the training course, please visit [www.cms.hhs.gov/partnerships](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/partnerships) and select "**National Medicare Training**".



## BRIGHT IDEAS TO PASS THE WORD ABOUT MAMMOGRAPHY

*Program Leaders who work as health care providers have a tremendous opportunity to boost mammography use. In one study, 94 percent of women whose physicians had recommended mammograms had obtained one in the last two years, while only 36 percent of women whose physicians had not made the recommendation had done so.*

During **National Breast Cancer Awareness Month's (NBCAM)** 19-year history, Program Leaders have developed many creative ways to reach women. This section provides bright ideas to reach women in the clinic, at the workplace, and in the community. Some of these ideas may work for you or inspire new thoughts.

In 2003, NBCAM's educational campaign is entitled **"Pass the Word,"** and consists of communication initiatives to facilitate a woman's decision to engage in early detection of breast cancer. As program leaders, you can help women and the community understand the importance of a breast cancer screening, particularly regularly-scheduled mammography.

The following are just some of the NBCAM success stories:

### SUCCESSSES

- October begins flu shot season. The Las Vegas chapter of the American Cancer Society with other partners reached 7,000 women who attended flu shot clinics throughout Las Vegas. Women received onsite enrollment for mammography and clinical breast exams.
- One clinic's staff wore pins that read "Ask Me About Mammography" to prompt discussions with patients and make office staff seem approachable.



### BRIGHT IDEAS

## OCTOBER IS NATIONAL BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

- On National Mammography Day and at other times during October, members of the

American College of Radiology with mobile mammography units partner with the CDC to bring mammography to underserved neighborhoods, others provide a free first-time mammogram in October. Some mammography facilities schedule one day a week when no appointments are necessary—women can walk in the door and receive a discount.

- Y-ME National Breast Cancer Organization Affiliates travel to corporations, women's organizations, churches, synagogues, temples, and conferences to present "Adult Breast Health Awareness" workshops. The program educates women about the importance of the three-step approach of early detection, mammography, clinical breast examination (CBE), and the correct methods for practicing breast self-examination (BSE). Y-ME empowers women to take an active role in their health care.
- Church bells rang and congregations stood silent during Sabbath services on the first Saturday of National Breast Cancer Awareness Month in northern New England to heighten attention about breast cancer. The events, called "Bells and Silence for Remembrance," received good local media attention.

- A Hopi tribe in Arizona partnered with local wellness groups to sponsor a "Walk the Hopi Mesas for Breast Cancer."

You will find other ways to **"Pass the Word"** on [www.nbcam.org](http://www.nbcam.org).



## BUILDING CAREGIVER COALITIONS

Mark Tuesday, September 30, 2003 on your calendars as the date for the ***“Building Caregiver Coalitions”*** satellite broadcast/webcast. The broadcast will be held from 1-3pm (ESDT).

There are four types of people: 1) Those who have been caregivers. 2) Those who currently are caregivers. 3) Those who will be caregivers. 4) Those who will need caregivers. Today, one out

of every four households (22.4 million) is involved in providing help to an older person. Eighty percent of all care received by older adults is provided by family and friends. Sixty-four percent of caregivers work. About one-third of the workforce is engaged in caregiving for older or disabled loved ones and by 2008, the percentage will have increased to 54%. As the population continues to age, the number of caregivers in the workforce will grow, placing tremendous burdens on both workers and their employers. In the aggregate, employee caregivers cost U.S. industries between \$11 and 29 billion per year in lost productivity. Caregiving is a major issue confronting our country.

***“Building Caregiver Coalitions”*** will feature a diversified 12-member panel representing caregiver organizations, coalition builders, business community representatives, and potential partners to develop strategies and share experiences in building state-focused coalitions to reach caregivers. There will be a question and answer session after the roundtable discussion to allow viewers to discuss coalition building issues with the panelists. The objective is to motivate organizations to develop, join, and sustain caregiver coalitions to help provide services and information to caregivers.

Satellite coordinates will be distributed closer to the broadcast time. Please be aware that in order to view this broadcast through satellite, you must have access to an analog steerable dish that receives a Ku- or C-band signal. Please visit [www.cms.gov/partnerships](http://www.cms.gov/partnerships) closer to broadcast time for connectivity information.

For your convenience, online registration is available at [www.cms.gov/partnerships](http://www.cms.gov/partnerships) or contact **Spencer Schron** at (410) 786-1075, [sschron@cms.hhs.gov](mailto:sschron@cms.hhs.gov), or **Betty Burrier** at (410) 786-4649, [bburrier1@cms.hhs.gov](mailto:bburrier1@cms.hhs.gov).



## 2003/2004 ENHANCEMENTS ON MEDICARE.GOV

The official U.S. Government Site for Medicare Information is at [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov). The site currently hosts 12 search tools, and experiences at least 6 major releases each year. The following enhancements are planned for 2003/2004:

- Launch of the new Medicare Eligibility Tool
- National quality data rollout on Home Health Compare
- Release of the 2004 cost/benefit and 2002 quality data on Medicare Personal Plan Finder
- Launch the new Hospital Compare tool
- Launch of certain e-transactions for beneficiaries (i.e., looking up claims status)
- Addition of Long-Term Care information

[WWW.MEDICARE.GOV](http://WWW.MEDICARE.GOV)

## GETTING HELP WITH YOUR MEDICARE QUESTIONS

*(NAPS)—Tommy G. Thompson, Secretary of Health and Human Services, answers readers' questions about Medicare.*

- Q.** I have questions about my Medicare coverage. Where can I get information to answer my questions?
- A.** To help you with your Medicare questions, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), our Federal agency that runs the Medicare program, has resources that can provide you with fast, reliable and accurate information right at your fingertips. Below are three important resources to help you get the information you need:
- **1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227), 24 hours of personal assistance in English or Spanish.** This toll-free helpline is available seven days a week to help with your questions. When you call, customer service representatives are available to provide assistance. The helpline also allows you to do some things automatically, like get important phone numbers, order publications and get answers to frequently asked questions. If you use a teletypewriter (TTY), you can call 1-877-486-2048.
  - **www.medicare.gov for up-to-date, easy-to-access healthcare information.** This Web site allows you to get information and answers to your questions about your Medicare at any time. It offers many tools to help you get the information you need to make healthcare decisions that are right for you. One of these tools is the “Medicare Personal Plan Finder.” It lets you compare Medicare health



## FOR PEOPLE WITH MEDICARE QUESTIONS, THERE ARE SEVERAL WAYS TO GET ANSWERS

plans and Medigap policies available in your area, out-of-pocket costs, benefits and the quality of health plan care. It helps you find the plan that's right for you. This site also provides basic information about Medicare, including what's covered, how to enroll and answers to common questions. You can search for telephone numbers of other organizations that can answer your questions. Some information on the site is available in Spanish and Chinese. Information on the site is updated regularly.

- **Medicare & You handbook, important Medicare information delivered to your door.** This handbook is mailed each fall to all people with Medicare. It provides basic information about the Medicare program, including health plan information for each state. In addition, the handbook provides information on Medicare rights and other available programs that may help pay some healthcare costs. The **Medicare & You** handbook is available in many different formats to meet the needs of all people with Medicare. You can get a copy of the handbook in English, Spanish, audiotope (English and Spanish), large print (English and Spanish) and braille.

These and other information resources are available to help you understand as much about the Medicare program as possible. CMS and I want you to have all the information you need to make important healthcare decisions.

*This article is the first in a series of six. To download this article for your own local placement, and other Medicare information materials, visit [www.cms.hhs.gov/partnerships/tools](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/partnerships/tools)*





## REGION X MEDICARE PARTNER NEWS

### A Pilot Project: Reaching Out to American Indians Residing in Urban Areas



The Seattle Regional Office is excited to be working with the Social Security Administration's Regional Office and the National Indian Council on Aging, on a project to provide Medicare and Social Security information to American Indians who might not have access to services provided by the Indian Health Services. Typically, in the Puget Sound area, these are American Indians living in urban areas such as Seattle or Tacoma.

The first training was held in Seattle in August. Approximately 30 attended, including tribal staff, American Indian elders, and representatives from other state and Federal agencies. The next training will take place in Seattle during November. The Medicare portion will focus on entitlement, enrollment, and communication channels including the [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov) Web site, **1-800-MEDICARE** toll-free telephone line, and the *Medicare & You* handbook.

This pilot project will enhance the Seattle Regional Office's abilities to assist the urban American Indian population residing in the Seattle area with their Medicare and Social Security needs. We hope to better understand how we can tailor our message to meet the needs of this population and to help them gain sufficient knowledge to make informed decisions about their health care.

We hope to use what we have learned in the Seattle pilot project in other areas such as Spokane, Tacoma, Portland, Salem, and Boise. For more information contact **Andrew Tartella (206) 615-2412**.



### Goodbye to Regional Administrator Linda Ruiz

After 25 years of Federal service in Washington, D.C., Baltimore, and most recently, Seattle, Region X's Regional Administrator, Linda Ruiz, is saying goodbye to CMS.

Linda has been the Regional Administrator in Seattle since 1998. Before coming to Seattle, she was the Director of the Office of Program Integrity at CMS headquarters in Baltimore. It was under her watch that the concept of paying it right the first time was developed, resulting in cost savings for the agency.

Linda can be proud of her many accomplishments while here in Seattle. In addition to being a strong advocate for beneficiary outreach, Linda has also reached out to the provider community, helped create a rural health network for the agency, and strengthened CMS ties with Federal Indian Tribes.

In retirement, Linda plans to spend more time traveling for pleasure. In December she is taking a trip to London, but she plans to be home in plenty of time to take on a brand new job in January—that of grandmother! Linda's son and daughter-in-law are expecting their first child after the New Year and she can hardly wait.

After the newness of retirement wears off, Linda acknowledges that she will probably look for other ways to continue her contributions to the community. In whatever she chooses to do, we know that she will do it well!



## REGION X MEDICARE PARTNER NEWS *(cont.)*

### Conference Will Address Latino Health Issues

The **2003 Washington State Latino Health Conference** promises to be an informative two days filled with educational sessions and networking opportunities focused on the special health needs of the Latino community. The conference will be beneficial to community-based organizations, health professionals, service providers, students, community members, academia, elected officials, and government agencies with an interest in Latino issues.

Keynote speakers are Dr. Jane Delgado, CEO of the National Alliance on Hispanic Health and Dr. Pedro José Greer, Jr., University of Miami School of Medicine. Dr. Delgado will discuss the current state of Hispanic Health and Dr. Greer will address a national vision for reducing health disparities.

The conference, co-sponsored by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, the Office of Minority Health, the Washington Association of Community and Migrant Health Centers, and the Washington State Department of Health, will be held at the Yakima Convention Center on September 25 and 26, 2003.

For more information, contact CMS Beneficiary Services Branch staff member **Juan Garcia (206) 615-2362**.

### Sixth Annual Train-the-Trainer Workshops

The **REACH Train-the-Trainer Workshops** will be offered in Boise, Portland, and Seattle this year. People who give training to information providers, volunteers/employees who provide services to Medicare beneficiaries, and those just interested in Medicare are invited to attend one of the three sessions. For the past five years, these Train-the-Trainer sessions have been a wonderful opportunity for people to learn about Medicare and network with others who provide services to Medicare beneficiaries.

In Boise, the training will be held on September 16 and 17 at 9:00 a.m. at the MK Plaza Auditorium, 720 Park Boulevard, Boise, Idaho.

In Portland, the training will be held on September 22 and 23 at 9:00 a.m. at the Providence Hospital Amphitheater, 4805 NE Glisan, Portland, Oregon.

The Seattle Train-the-Trainer workshops will be held on September 29 and 30 at the Regional Office, Blanchard Plaza, 2201 6th Avenue, Seattle, Washington.

The two-day training sessions are free but registration is required. Please contact **Andrew Tartella at (206) 615- 2412 ([atartella@cms.hhs.gov](mailto:atartella@cms.hhs.gov))** or **Ana Coo-Lam at (206) 615-2523 ([acoolam@cms.hhs.gov](mailto:acoolam@cms.hhs.gov))** if you have any questions.





# REGION X MEDICARE PARTNER NEWS (cont.)

## Region X Welcomes New Regional Director



HHS Secretary Tommy G. Thompson recently named Oregonian **Beverly Clarno** as his **Regional Director for Region X**.

In her new position, Clarno will be Secretary Thompson's direct representative responsible for official dealings with state, local and tribal government organizations and will further enhance the Secretary's commitment to state and local health agencies. The region includes the states of Alaska, Idaho, Oregon and Washington.

Clarno is an Oregon native who was elected to the Oregon House of Representatives in 1988 and became House Speaker in 1995. She was elected to the Oregon Senate in 2000, where she served as Assistant Majority Leader and most recently as Senate Republican Leader.

## Region X Calendar of Events

### SEPTEMBER

- 16 Take a Loved One to the Doctor Day  
Rainier Beach Community Center, 10am-2pm  
Seattle, WA. This event is free and open to the public.
- 16-17 REACH 2003 Train-the-Trainer Workshop  
(sponsored by CMS, Region X)  
MK Plaza Auditorium, Boise, ID  
Training to help you provide Medicare information to the people you serve.
- 20 Visit the Medicare Booth at the Puyallup Fair  
Education Building, 10am-6pm  
Puyallup, WA
- 22-23 REACH 2003 Train-the-Trainer Workshop  
(sponsored by CMS, Region X)  
Providence Hospital Amphitheater, Portland, OR  
Training to help you provide Medicare information to the people you serve.
- 25-26 Latino Health Conference  
Yakima Convention Center, Yakima, WA
- 26 Second Annual Health in the Neighborhood  
Community Health Fair  
Central Area Senior Center, 10am-3pm  
Seattle, WA
- 29-30 REACH 2003 Train-the-Trainer Workshop  
(sponsored by CMS, Region X)  
CMS Region X Office, Room 204  
Blanchard Plaza Building, Seattle, WA  
Training to help you provide Medicare information to the people you serve.

### OCTOBER

- 9 Latino Health Summit  
(sponsored by the Idaho Primary Care Assn. and the Idaho Migrant Council)  
Boise State University, Boise, ID  
For more information, including registration fee, contact the Idaho Migrant Council, 208-454-1652
- 11 Diabetes Fair  
(sponsored by the Asian Pacific American Resource Network)  
The New Holly Gathering Hall, 10am-3pm  
Seattle, WA. This event is free and open to the public.
- 18 Canyon County Organization on Aging Health Fair  
10am-3pm  
O'Conner Field House, Caldwell, ID  
This event is free and open to the public.

### NOVEMBER

- 13 Washington County Latino Senior Health Fair  
10am-3pm  
Forest Grove Senior Center  
Washington County, OR  
This event is free and open to the public.

Note: Unless otherwise noted, please contact Region X's Beneficiary Services Branch for more information on these events at 206-615-2354.

### MEDICARE MATTERS

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### WHAT'S THE BUZZ?



The FAQs on [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov) are continuously updated to reflect the most popular topics of interest about Medicare. Want to know what's hot in Medicare? Go to [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov) and select Frequently Asked Questions. Want to use the Q & A's for your own publication? Simply copy and paste the text. There's even a feature to email the question & answer column to yourself or a friend.