

Senior PharmAssist Volunteer Job Description

Title: SHIIP Volunteer Counselor

Description of Work:

Senior PharmAssist's Senior Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP) volunteer counselors assist Medicare beneficiaries of Durham County with questions regarding Medicare prescription drug plans, Medicare supplements, and Medicare Advantage Plans. These volunteers provide one-on-one counseling with Medicare beneficiaries at the Senior PharmAssist (SPA) office. SHIIP volunteer counselors will work in conjunction with SPA staff to help Medicare beneficiaries better understand the intricacies of Medicare. This includes assisting beneficiaries in navigating the many Medicare insurance options based on the beneficiaries' medications and health priorities and/or discussing current drug plans or helping to choose a new drug plan. SHIIP volunteer counselors must understand that they are only guiding Medicare beneficiaries and ultimately it is up to the beneficiary to make any decisions. Even if there is a drug plan that the SHIIP volunteer counselor feels may be better suited than the one a beneficiary chose, it is not their decision to make. They can only advise.

Volunteers should:

- Be comfortable with technology, including navigating websites and using Zoom
- Not be, or have an immediate family member who is an active insurance salesperson
- Complete a 13-hour on-line training certification course from the NC Department of Insurance SHIIP office; it often takes less time.
- After training course is complete shadow current SHIIP volunteer counselors (virtual and/or in-person)
- After shadowing current SHIIP volunteer counselors, current SHIIP volunteer counselors will sit in on several appointments led by the SHIIP volunteer counselor or other designated SHIIP volunteer or staff member
- Work with the SHIIP coordinator or the SHIIP volunteer coordinator to schedule counseling sessions; this ideally includes 4-hr slots per week during the busy 7-week Medicare Open Enrollment Period (OEP) and less frequent outside of OEP
- Keep all participant information (medical and financial) confidential
- Never recommend a specific insurance company or policy
- Attend quarterly meeting sponsored by the State SHIIP office
- Attend SPA "in-house" (roughly quarterly) SHIIP Shape Sharing led by staff and volunteer leads