

WYOMING DEPARTMENT OF INSURANCE
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*****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*****

State Health Insurance Information Program Helps Wyoming Consumers

CHEYENNE, Wyo. – The Wyoming State Health Insurance Information Program (WSHIIP) is a federally grant funded program designed to assist Medicare beneficiaries across Wyoming to enroll in and understand Medicare benefits, determine eligibility and assist in applying for low-income assistance programs. In addition, WSHIIP can aid in filing Medicare appeals, all at no cost to Wyoming consumers. The program provides numerous presentations, distributes educational materials, and attends health and senior fairs across Wyoming.

For the 2017 calendar year WSHIIP served 8,552 people, a 2.7% increase over 2016. WSHIIP provides one-on-one counseling to individuals who have questions or issues with their Medicare. In addition, WSHIIP provided 90 educational presentations and enrollment events across the state, reaching an estimated 2,900 people. Counselors distributed materials at booths and exhibits as well, reaching almost 2,000 attendees.

During the 2017 Open Enrollment period, WSHIIP assisted 3,677 beneficiaries. This is an increase of 5.3% compared to 2016. “This year we were tracking the dollars saved to beneficiaries by changing drug plans to more cost effective plans,” said Kelly Wicks, WSHIIP Program Manager. The program shows a savings of: \$1,217,768, based on the information from counselors and volunteers who indicated the dollars saved on their contact sheets. However, actual savings from WSHIIP assistance could be much higher.

WSHIIP counselors help Wyoming consumers navigate through the barrage of information and choices they confront on an annual basis. They help consumers make the most informed decisions in order to maximize their healthcare dollars. Many WSHIIP counselors are volunteers, some are Medicare beneficiaries themselves, who are trained and certified to help others navigate the Medicare and health insurance systems. They can provide valuable assistance for older Wyomingites and for consumers with disabilities. If you are interested in becoming a SHIP counselor, contact WSHIIP at 1-800-856-4398 for more information.

If you have any questions about Medicare, please contact the Wyoming State Health Insurance Information Program (WSHIIP) at 1-800-856-4398, or the Wyoming Insurance Department at 1-800-438-5768.