

Minutes 5/21/08

Roll call (12 people total)

Jim Lunsford, Juneau – Senior and Caregiver Resource Center 463-0268 – application mailed to them for assistance on paying higher utility costs due to avalanche in Juneau area

Kathy Pepe, Kathy Roberts, Carol Jackson – all at Anchorage Senior Center

Laurie Murdock – Kodiak – Senior Citizens of Kodiak -

Louise Anderson – Valdez Senior Center

Jennie Jacobson – Unalaska

Julie Welch – Ninilchik

Rita Hatch – OPAG

Art Delaune - Fairbanks

Jeanne Larson and Judith Bendersky from the Senior Information Office

Reports from the field

Jim Lunsford – if people call regarding needing assistance 463-0268 – application mailed to them for assistance on paying higher utility costs due to avalanche in Juneau area or info can be downloaded from www.ccsjuneau.org

Jim will be assisting a person this afternoon sign up for Part D. The person will be 65 in August. Jim will first ask if the person has any other insurance

Times to enroll people in Part D – on or off of LIS, moving from one to another state, moving in from another country.

Economic stimulus package – he asks if they've applied for it so they can get \$300.00

There's also a telephone number to call if you haven't heard back – it's IRS – 866-234-2942; If you file a 1040 you can file. They said you have to file a 1040A. On the IRS webpage there are instructions on how to apply. People getting the stimulus rebate may have to wait a while.

There's a "gatekeeper" program sponsored by the city of Juneau. CCS has been designated to provide the service of helping business recognize elders at risk.

The Municipality of Anchorage has a disaster registry to register seniors or people with disabilities that need to be assisted in the event of a disaster. The website link is <http://www.muni.org/oem/registry.cfm>

211 is available statewide.

Julie Welch from Ninilchik reported 100# - 300# halibut and Kings being caught. ALS – along with end-stage renal disease enable you to get Medicare.

Some home health services are available to a gentleman in the community now.

Rita Hatch – re self-administrable drugs. A gentleman was taken to the hospital by ambulance. Was in the hospital for 7 hours as an outpatient for observation. Wife was billed for all the meds he took at the hospital. If the patient is aware and insists on taking their own medication they can, but usually in an emergency people are not able to take their own medications. The hospital doesn't want liability for the patient taking their own patient. If the patient would have been an inpatient those costs would have been billed under Part A.

Re. the problem in Anchorage and Fairbanks finding a doctor that will take new Medicare, there's a new committee forming to raise awareness about the problem of finding a primary care physician. Meeting will be June 23rd at the Anchorage Senior Center at 10:00 a.m. If you would like information on this or Medigap info that Rita uses (script and cheat-sheet) please contact her at chitina@gci.net or at OPAG 276-1059.

Rita on counseling clients about Medigap – Rita read the script she has created and shared the basic information that she has outlined on three pages about Medigap. This covers the basic information that a person needs to know when thinking about Medigap. Two authoritative documents from CMS are below:

- 2008 Choosing a Medigap Policy
www.medicare.gov/Publications/Pubs/pdf/02110.pdf
- State of Alaska Medigap Rate Guide
www.commerce.state.ak.us/insurance/pub/2007_Medicare_Rate_Guide.pdf

Participant on the teleconference was counseled to enrolled in Part D when she turned 65. She also enrolled in Parts A and B and ALSO has health insurance through employment. She has been paying double, in other words, for part D and group health plan. She will drop the part D plan soon. If you drop the Part D the Part D plan has to complete paperwork to inform Social Security. You can also double check and contact Social Security to be sure that they discontinue deductions for the Part D plan that you cancel, but you will also need paperwork from the plan.

You can call Social Security regarding deductions and/or go to the social security website.

Jeanné Larson on DMEPOS

You are being informed about this because it will affect snowbirds who go outside of Alaska, but not something we'll see here in Alaska for a while.. Medicare adopted a DMEPOS program. This stands for Durable medical equipment prosthetic, orthotic and supplies. This is a program where CMS has a

new way of determining costs and who can furnish these DME items. CMS has a bidding program in certain zip codes in the US including Pittsburgh, North Carolina, Kentucky, Missouri, Florida,
People need to know there are certain types of equipment they can only get from certain providers. You can get “What you should know if you Need Medicare-covered equipment or supplies” which is publication No. 11307 from 9/07.

Ten product categories (this is not a complete list):

- Oxygen supplies and equipment,
- Standard power wheelchairs
- Complex rehab power wheelchairs
- Mail-order diabetic supplies
- Enteral nutrients
- CPAP devices and RADs supplies and accessories
- Hospital beds and related accessories
- Negative pressure wound therapy devices
- Walkers and related accessories
- Group 2 support surfaces, including mattresses and overlays

Suppliers who do business in these areas submit a bid and must meet Medicare’s standards and accredited. They will be called “contract suppliers.” To check if an item someone uses is in the program call 1-800-MEDICARE or use medicare.gov

LIS Media and “extra help” media campaign

Judith described the Mother’s and Father’s day ads, the new toolkit on the Alaska SHIP website

<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/Partnerships/Toolkits/itemdetail.asp?itemID=CMS1188820>

Rita routinely asks people if they would like to apply for LIS when she is counseling them for Part D enrollment.

To get copies of the Senior Voice call 1-800 - 478-1059 – give them the address you’d like issues sent to and OPAG will send them.