



MEMORANDUM

TO: Area Agencies on Aging **NOTICE #:** 010204-2-I-OVCS

FROM: Terry White
Secretary

DATE: January 2, 2004

SUBJECT: Notice of Instruction: Sunshine for Seniors (SfS) Implementation

The purpose of this notice is to advise you that the Sunshine for Seniors Prescription Assistance Program, (previously referenced in NOTICE #: 100103-1-1-OVCS, dated October 1, 2003) will officially begin January 7, 2004. SfS will be implemented through the existing network of trained SHINE volunteers and is designed to provide information to low-income seniors, aged 60 and over, about free and discount prescription drug programs and options. SfS counselors will inform consumers of program eligibility criteria established by pharmaceutical companies and the drugs covered by those programs. John Chreno, SHINE Program Director, and his staff have been working with your SHINE Liaisons on implementation activities and we look forward to a successful program.

Training for SHINE volunteers and other volunteers is ongoing. By January 7, 2004, it is anticipated about 100 prescription specialists will have received at least six hours of training in research and Internet information sources presented by the Department of Elder Affairs SHINE Training Coordinator and staff. Programs such as NeedyMeds and RxAssist.org will guide volunteers to access available program criteria, application assistance and alternatives. Sunshine for Seniors program updates will be ongoing and volunteers will be available to provide service in every PSA.

On January 7, 2004, through calls to the network of Elder Helplines, contacts with SHINE-SfS Volunteers at events such as health fairs, and regular counseling sites in Senior Centers, SfS volunteers will receive referrals and begin to provide services. A prescription assistance intake form has been developed to assist in gathering relevant information to provide services, and that document may be completed during the initial contact with the senior. That data, with in-person/telephone or other electronic interview methods, will provide the basis for service. I&R staff will be provided copies of the intake form. It is desired for I&R staff to use this document for service referrals to a single designated point in each AAA. Locally trained SHINE staff and volunteers or SHINE staff in the DoEA can provide instruction on use of the form.

The intake form will be used by volunteers to document hours of service provided, an estimate of potential savings, which may be realized by the consumer and a verification of required HIPPA notification. During the first weeks following roll-out, trained SHINE SfS counselors will be encouraged to gain needed experience in using assistance programs by serving existing low-income clients with prescription assistance needs.

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Lead Agency Case Managers or other staff may refer seniors needing prescription assistance services. Self-referrals from other seniors not currently being served by Lead Agencies may also be accepted. During all prescription assistance contacts, seniors will be advised, educated and encouraged to develop a level of self-sufficiency so any future prescription discounts may be achieved by their own efforts or with minimal volunteer assistance.

AAA staff will create a schedule of outreach and publicity events to promote prescription assistance in each PSA. Materials for publicity will be created and provided by DoEA. Each AAA will determine the appropriate level of additional publicity and outreach based on their ability to recruit and train volunteers, and based on the local response as determined by consumers requesting service. Outreach, equipment, software and Internet access has been funded by the Legislature. Contract amendment documentation has been developed to provide each AAA \$10,000 in General Revenue implementation funds. These funds must be used by June 30, 2004.

Staff and volunteer assistance may be received through the Sunshine for Seniors Program Coordinator Desk at (850) 414-2125 or by email to SunshineSeniors@elderaffairs.org, which is a new GroupWise mailbox. Should you have other implementation questions or publicity needs, please contact John Chreno, SHINE Program Director, at (850) 414-2157. Thank you for your assistance on this important initiative.