



SHIP

State Health Insurance
Assistance Program

Navigating Medicare

ASK SHIP

YOUR MONTHLY MEDICARE Q&A

February, 2022

Q: I was curious about becoming a SHIP Counselor before the pandemic hit. Is SHIP still helping Medicare beneficiaries and are they accepting new counselors?

A: During the COVID pandemic, SHIP needs volunteers more than ever! SHIP has taken efforts to ensure the safety of all of our volunteers and clients, such as offering a variety of ways to get SHIP counseling virtually, by phone, or at a safe distance.

So, what is SHIP and what do SHIP counselors do to help?

SHIP, the State Health Insurance Assistance Program, is a free and impartial health insurance counseling program for people with Medicare. SHIP does NOT sell insurance. SHIP is provided by the Administration for Community Living and the Indiana Department of Insurance. We are part of a federal network of State Health Insurance Assistance Programs located in every state. All of our services are free and impartial.

SHIP offers gratifying volunteer opportunities for hundreds of people across Indiana. We provide services through many channels: seminars, local community training, one-on-one

counseling, public speaking, publications, videos and more.

SHIP is driven by volunteers who are committed to helping people with Medicare determine the best healthcare choices for their individual situations and to be good consumers of Medicare, Medicare Advantage, Part D drug coverage, long term care financing, and low-income assistance programs.

SHIP has more than 70 sites throughout Indiana and offers its volunteers choices on how they would like to help.

Personal Counseling includes direct discussion with Medicare beneficiaries about their individual situations and may include review of personal information, such as Medicare Summary Notices, billing statements, and other related financial and health documents. This can take place on-site, by phone, or virtually.

Our Special Events and Presentations aim to educate through presentations, virtual presentations, health fairs, and other events geared toward Medicare recipients.

To become a SHIP counselor, you must:

- Complete a 30-hour training either virtually or in-person (as attendance and safety permit).
- Complete volunteer shadowing
- Have a desire to help Medicare Beneficiaries in your community.
- Participate in regular local in-service or virtual training sessions (usually two half-day sessions per year)
- NOT be affiliated with (i.e., employed by, or in a position to sell) any insurance product, agency, company or service
- Be willing to assure complete confidentiality to every client
- Complete required paperwork documenting each client contact

If you are interested in becoming a SHIP volunteer, or have questions related to Medicare, call SHIP at (800) 452-4800, (866) 846-0139 TTY or online at www.medicare.in.gov. You can also find us on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and YouTube.