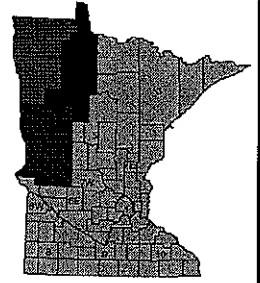


Land of the Dancing Sky
Area Agency on Aging
Senior News

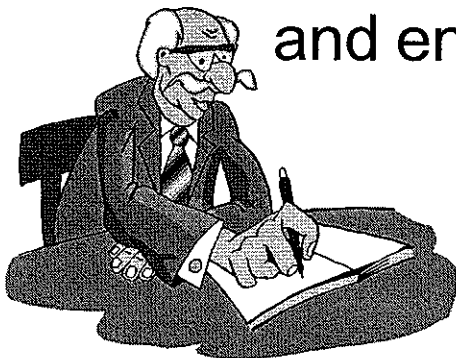


Volume 12, Issue 1 --- April 2006

Initial Enrollment Deadline to Sign Up For a Medicare Prescription Drug Plan (Part D) is May 15, 2006. Eligible beneficiaries who have not signed up for a Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit plan by May 15th will incur financial penalties in the form of higher premiums beginning May 16th.

Have You Had A Comparison Done to Find a Plan That Will Work for You?

Call the Senior LinkAge Line™
1-800-333-2433 for assistance with comparing
and enrolling in a plan.



Region One Office
115 South Main, Suite 1
Warren, MN 56762
(218) 745-6733

Region 2 Office
PO Box 301
Park Rapids, MN 56470
(800) 333-2433

West Central Office
PO Box 726
Fergus Falls, MN 56537
(218) 739-4617

Medicare Beneficiaries Urged to be on the Look-out for Phone Scams



The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) warns seniors and people with disabilities to be aware of a scheme that asks Medicare beneficiaries for money and checking account information to help them enroll in a Medicare Prescription Drug Plan.

This scheme is called the “\$299 Ring” for the typical amount of money Medicare beneficiaries are talked into withdrawing from their checking accounts to pay for a

non-existent prescription drug plan. Consumers can report these cases to their local law enforcement agencies or 1-877-7SAFERX (1-877-772-3379).

Medicare has received complaints from Indiana, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts New Jersey and Georgia. Complaints have been made against a number of different companies, but authorities believe that the companies are the same and are typically based outside the U. S. As soon as CMS receives these complaints, they are investigated and referred to federal law enforcement authorities.

No Medicare drug plan can ask a person with Medicare for bank account or other personal information over the telephone. No beneficiary should ever provide that kind of information to a caller. They should contact their local police department if they believe someone is trying to take money or information from them illegally.

People with Medicare should also remember that they should be on the lookout for anyone trying to take advantage of them and take steps to protect themselves by remembering:

Continued on Page 3

Phone Scam continued...

- No one can come into your home uninvited.
- No one can ask you for personal information during their marketing activities.
- Always keep all personal information, such as your Medicare number, safe, just as you would a credit card or a bank account number.
- Whenever you have a question or concern about any activity regarding Medicare, call 1-800-MEDICARE.

In addition, legitimate Medicare drug plans will not ask for payment over the telephone or the Internet. They must bill the beneficiary for the monthly premium. Typically, that amount is set up as an automatic withdrawal from the beneficiary's monthly Social Security check. Beneficiaries may also opt to pay the monthly premiums in other ways such as writing a check or setting up automatic payments from their checking accounts.



Celebrating Our Volunteers!

National Volunteer Week is April 23-29th. The Land of the Dancing Sky Area Agency on Aging would like to recognize all the hard work each and every one of our Health Insurance Counseling Volunteers has done this year! We have 91 volunteers serving the 21 county area!



Hurray for Volunteers!

Land of the Dancing Sky Staff entertaining volunteers at a recent quarterly update meeting held on March 30 in Warren.

Each volunteer has their own special talents and interests which enables every one of them to be compassionate about volunteering. We just want to say a special thanks to all of you who take your own time to volunteer. Your gifts of time and dedication are making a difference in the lives of many and it is truly appreciated!

If you would like information about volunteering, contact the Senior LinkAge Line™ at 1-800-333-2433.



Some of the amazing volunteers attending the March 30th quarterly update meeting!

Front: David F., Darcy H., Judy Y.

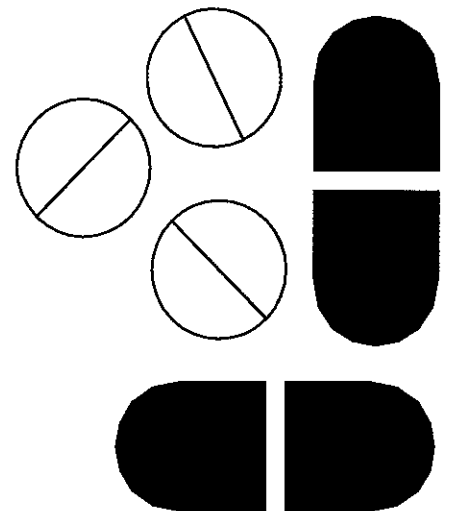
Back: Henrietta L., Marilyn C., Elden J., Doreen H., Ardis B.

Medication Management Consultation Available

The Minnesota Area Agencies on Aging and the Minnesota Pharmacists Association have joined forces to offer free medication assessments for seniors in Minnesota.

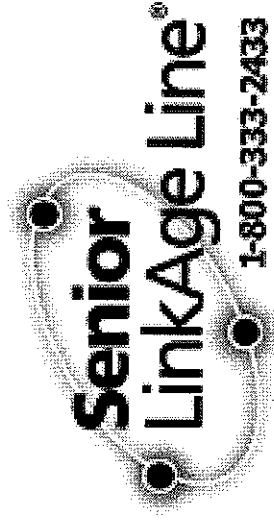
A project pharmacist will meet with seniors on a 1-1 basis and review their prescriptions for:

- 1) Drug-drug interactions (including prescription, non-prescription and herbal medications)
- 2) Drug-condition interactions (Does any of your drug therapy adversely affect your other medical conditions?)
- 3) Appropriate doses (Is the dosage you are taking appropriate for your current condition?)
- 4) Unnecessary therapy (Are you taking a medication that you no longer need?)
- 5) Missing drug therapy (Is there a prescription or other medication missing from your daily regimen?)
- 6) Compliance Issues (Are you having problems taking your medications the way your doctor intended?)
- 7) Proper monitoring of drug therapy (Are you having the labs and other follow-up you need to make sure your drug therapy is safe and effective?)
- 8) Therapeutic duplication (Are you on more than one medication that works the same way?)
- 9) Potential cost savings when appropriate (Are you aware that in some cases another drug with the same ability to treat your condition, but with a lower price tag, may be available?)



If you think you may be interested in this medication management program in your community, please call the Senior LinkAge Line™ at: 1-800-333-2433 to set up this free service.

Land of the Dancing Sky Area Agency on Aging
NW Regional Development Commission
115 South Main, Suite 1
Warren, MN 56762



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Agency on Aging

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updated!**

Thanks!