



Improving the lives of older Americans

About the National Center for Benefits Outreach and Enrollment

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The National Center for Benefits Outreach and Enrollment helps organizations enroll seniors and younger adults with disabilities with limited means into the benefits programs for which they are eligible so that they can remain healthy, remain active in their communities and improve the quality of their lives.



About the Center – History

- Reauthorization of Older Americans Act (2006) directed AoA to establish a national center on senior benefits outreach and enrollment
- In September 2008, NCOA awarded cooperative agreement and established the National Center for Benefits Outreach and Enrollment
- In May 2009, NCOA/Center awarded the contract to serve as the MIPPA Resource Center
- As of 2010, cooperative agreement between Administration on Aging and Food and Nutrition Services to manage state pilots to increase participation of eligible seniors into SNAP

About the Center – Mission

- To increase access to benefits for seniors and younger adults with disabilities by:
 - Providing tools, resources and technology that help local, state and regional organizations to find, counsel and assist seniors and younger adults with disabilities to apply for and enroll in the benefits for which they may be eligible; and
 - Generating and disseminating new knowledge about best practices and cost effective strategies for benefits outreach and enrollment.

About the Center – Mission (2)

- Focus on public benefits critical to Medicare beneficiaries with limited incomes and resources:
 - Medicare Part D Extra Help/Low-Income Subsidy (LIS)
 - Medicare Savings Programs (MSP)
 - Medicaid
 - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)/Food Stamps
 - Energy assistance (LIHEAP)
 - State Pharmacy Assistance Programs (SPAP)
 - SSI
- Emphasis on person-centered strategies

About the Center – Audiences

- *Primary:* Local, state and national organizations that help find and enroll seniors and younger adults with disabilities in need-based benefits programs
 - Eligibility agencies are key partners in the effort to make enrollment more seamless for those eligible *and* more efficient for adjudication agencies
- *Secondary:* Consumers and their families

How We Do It – MIPPA Grantees and Benefits Enrollment Centers

- MIPPA Resource Center:

- Providing oversight, technical assistance, training to 49 states, DC and PR
 - ♦ AAAs, ADRCs and SHIPs assisting those eligible for LIS and MSPs - making Medicare affordable to the poorest beneficiaries
- Providing accountability to federal sponsors, CMS and AoA through receiving and analyzing periodic data reports

- Benefits Enrollment Centers:

- 20 BECs in 18 states
- Comprehensive person-centered benefits access systems
 - ♦ LIS, MSP, SNAP, Community Medicaid, LIHEAP, (SSI and state-funded or local benefits such as real property tax relief, etc.)
- Innovations RFP on the street

How We Do It – SNAP Pilots

- SNAP Pilots - Increase SNAP uptake among eligible seniors
 - Cooperative agreement between FNS and AoA
 - Pilots testing:
 - ♦ Using data from online LIS applications to electronically trigger SNAP applications
 - Aging network benefits counselors help to perfect applications
 - ♦ Starting applications by moving data from Benefits Check Up screening tool into SNAP (and often more benefits) applications tool
 - Same assistance as above from aging network benefits counselors
 - ♦ Benefits counselors help make the applications process more efficient and seamless

How We Do It – Training and Technical Assistance

- **Training and technical assistance on effective outreach, screening, enrollment, and follow-up strategies:**
 - Monthly webinars
 - Issue briefs/case studies
 - Samples of outreach/enrollment materials
 - Individual training for states on MIPPA topics
 - Individual TA as needed - via phone, email, in person, etc.
 - Conference presentations
 - Online community for MIPPA grantees (through www.NCOAcrossroads.org)

How We Do It – Promising Practices Clearinghouse

- **Clearinghouse** on promising practices and cost-effective methods for finding and enrolling people in benefits:
 - Searchable database at:
<http://www.centerforbenefits.org/clearinghouse.html>
 - Promising practices related to:
 - Raising awareness and making connections
 - Screening for eligibility
 - Application assistance
 - Understanding and using benefits - economic stimulus for your communities
 - Retaining benefits as long as eligibility continues
 - Submit your own examples!

How We Do It – Web Tools

- **BenefitsCheckUp** - www.BenefitsCheckUp.org online tool that helps with screening and (in some cases) applying for benefits:

- Free
- Confidential
- Has own online LIS application, through which a person can be “shadow screened” for other benefits such as MSP, SNAP, etc.
- Center can help you create customized (“private label”) state sites, which automatically populate MIPPA reporting tool with # of LIS applications completed through tool (e.g. <http://www.BenefitsCheckUp.org/Florida>)



Connect with us

- Share your thoughts, ideas,
- Work with us and our state and local partners
- Become part of our network
- How to be in touch with us:
 - Website: <http://www.CenterforBenefits.org>
 - Email: CenterforBenefits@ncoa.org

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