

## **Medicare Open Enrollment Starts Oct. 15 - Local Help Available**

### **Local News**

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OLYMPIA, Wash. - Medicare's [open enrollment period for prescription drug plans \(Part D\)](#) and [Medicare Advantage plans](#) starts Oct. 15 and runs through Dec. 7. "Many Medicare plans are changing this year," said Insurance Commissioner Mike Kreidler. "Our Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors (SHIBA) can help you choose a plan that best meets your needs." SHIBA can help answer questions and evaluate plans. "Our unbiased volunteers in your community can answer your questions and search for plans online," said Marijean Holland, SHIBA Program Manager. "We also offer assistance with Original Medicare and other health plans, and provide free, unbiased information."

Before you choose a Medicare plan, consider the following tips:

- Plan costs and coverage can change every year, so carefully review all letters and notices from your current plan.
- Make a list of all current prescription drugs you take, the doses, and how often. Then, use the Plan Finder at [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov) to compare Part D plans.
- Review the 2013 *Medicare & You* handbook. You should receive it by mid-October.
- If you have questions, call 1-800- MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227) before you sign up.
- If you have limited income and need help paying for prescription drugs, check out Medicare's "Extra Help" program. To see if you qualify, contact the Social Security Administration at 1-800-772-1213 or go to [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov) and click on Medicare. "Whatever you do, don't wait until the end of the enrollment period to get help," added Kreidler. "Call us today at 1-800-562-6900 and ask to schedule an appointment with a SHIBA volunteer advisor in your area." Free Medicare workshops in your area: [www.insurance.wa.gov/shiba/index](http://www.insurance.wa.gov/shiba/index)

For help in other languages, call:

- § Spanish, Medicare, 1-800-633-4227
- § Spanish, National Alliance for Hispanic Health, 1-866-783-2645
- § Korean, National Asian Pacific Center on Aging, 1-800-582-4259
- § Chinese, National Asian Pacific Center on Aging, 1-800-582-4218
- § Vietnamese, National Asian Pacific Center on Aging, 1-800-582-4336

Or ask a trusted friend or relative for help.