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NEWS RELEASE

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Idaho SHIBA Awarded 2011 Grant Funding by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

BOISE ID (April 6, 2011) – The Idaho Department of Insurance office of Senior Health Insurance Benefits Advisors (SHIBA) has been awarded $379,295.00 in grant money from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS).

The grant money, part of nearly $46.5 million being distributed nationwide, will be used to provide counseling to Medicare beneficiaries. SHIBA staff and volunteers will use the funds specifically to encourage beneficiaries to take advantage of the new, free annual wellness visit and other preventive services that the Affordable Care Act provides.

SHIBA coordinator Jacquie Kennedy-Gooch says, "This grant money will enable us to increase our efforts to assist current and newly eligible Medicare beneficiaries and their caregivers. We partner with CMS to make healthcare accessible to those who are often less likely to receive preventive care."

SHIBA will reach out to people who are most likely eligible for Medicare's low-income subsidy and may benefit from lower prescription drug costs, beneficiaries with disabilities, and diverse racial and ethnic groups, particularly individuals with limited English proficiency.

Staff and volunteers will also help beneficiaries identify and report suspected Medicare fraud.

SHIBA provides free and unbiased information, counseling and assistance regarding senior health insurance with the objective of assisting seniors in making informed buying decisions. To contact a SHIBA representative, Idahoans should call 800-247-4422.

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