



North Carolina
Department of Health and Human Services
Division of Medical Assistance
Recipient Services EIS

1985 Umstead Drive – 2512 Mail Service Center - Raleigh, N.C. 27699-2512
Courier Number 56-20-06

Michael F. Easley, Governor
Carmen Hooker Odom, Secretary

Nina M. Yeager, Director
(919) 857-4019

May 23, 2003

**Re: SSA Outreach Mailing to Potential
Medicare Savings Program Candidates**

Dear County Directors of Social Services:

Beginning June 2003, the Social Security Administration (SSA) will conduct a mandated outreach project to provide information to individuals who may be eligible for the Medicare Savings Programs. The Medicare Savings Programs provide assistance with payment of the Medicare premiums. These programs include Medicaid for Qualified Medicare Beneficiaries (MQB-Q and B) and Medicaid for Qualifying Individuals (MQB-E).

An estimated five million letters will be sent randomly on a nationwide basis to individuals and couples, who based on SSA records, appear to meet the income requirements for the Medicare Savings Program. This effort will occur three times a week and begin approximately June 2nd and continue through October. During this timeframe, an estimated 141, 000 letters will be mailed to individuals and couples in North Carolina. Spanish and English versions of the letters are attached for your review. These letters should not be sent to individuals currently receiving assistance with payment of their Medicare premiums. However, this may happen.

In previous outreach projects, the SSA has included in the letter state-specific eligibility criteria and contact information. This year, the letters will direct individuals to contact their state or local medical assistance office, social service or welfare office for information on the programs that help pay Medicare expenses. Telephone numbers for these agencies will not be included in the letter.

We wanted to share this with you so you may ensure that your staff is aware of this outreach and alert you to the possibility that your staff may receive additional telephone calls about the Medicare Savings Programs.

SSA Outreach
Page 2

If you have any questions, please contact your Medicaid Program Representative.

Sincerely,

Nina Yeager

NMY:vb

Attachments



SOCIAL SECURITY



Attachment 1

[QMB/SLMB/QI Letter]

Information from the Social Security Administration about the Medicare Savings Programs (Help From Your State to Pay Your Medicare Premiums)

State programs help millions of people with Medicare save money each year. The names for these programs change from State-to-State, but they are usually called “Medicare Savings Programs,” “buy-in programs” or the “qualified Medicare beneficiary program.” These programs help people with limited income and resources pay their Medicare premiums. In some cases, the programs may also pay Medicare deductibles and coinsurance.

You can apply for these programs if:

- You have Medicare Part A, also known as Medicare Hospital Insurance. (If you pay for Medicare Part A or could purchase Part A but don't think you can afford it, there is a program that may pay the Medicare Part A premium for you.)

and

- You are an individual with resources of \$4,000 or less, or a couple with resources of \$6,000 or less. Resources include things like money in a checking or savings account, stocks, or bonds. When counting your resources, do **not** include certain items like the home where you live, your home furnishings, a car, burial plots, and \$1,500 in a burial account.

and

- You are an individual with a monthly income of less than **\$1,031*** or a couple with a monthly income of less than **\$1,384.***

NOTE: Individual States may have more generous income and/or resources requirements.

Call your State or local medical assistance (Medicaid) office, social service or welfare office listed in the blue (government) pages of your phone book and ask for information on the programs that help pay Medicare expenses. It's very important to call if you think you qualify for any of these Medicare Savings Programs, even if you aren't sure.

Jo Anne B. Barnhart
Commissioner
Social Security Administration

Thomas A. Scully
Administrator
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

*Income limits will change slightly in 2004. If you live in Alaska or Hawaii, income limits are slightly higher.

For help with your Medicare questions, visit www.medicare.gov or call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.



SOCIAL SECURITY



Attachment 2

[QMB/SLMB/QI Letter]

Información de la Administración de Seguro Social sobre los Programas de Ahorros de Medicare (Ayuda de parte de su estado para pagar las primas de Medicare)

Cada año, los programas estatales han ayudado a miles de personas con Medicare, a ahorrar dinero. Los nombres de estos programas cambian de estado a estado, pero usualmente, se llaman “Programas de Ahorros de Medicare”, “Programas de pago de Medicare”, “Programa para beneficiarios elegibles a Medicare”. Estos programas ayudan a las personas con ingresos y recursos limitados a pagar sus primas de Medicare. En algunos casos, los programas también pueden pagar los deducibles y coaseguros de Medicare.

Usted puede solicitar para estos programas si:

- Tiene la Parte A de Medicare, también conocida como Seguro de Hospital de Medicare. (Si usted paga por la Parte A o puede comprar la Parte A pero piensa que no podrá financiarla, hay un programa que puede pagar la prima de la Parte A de Medicare por usted).

Y

- Usted es un individuo con recursos de \$4,000 o menos, o una pareja con recursos de \$6,000 o menos. Los recursos incluyen cosas como dinero en una cuenta de cheques o ahorros, acciones, o bonos. Cuando cuente sus recursos, **no** incluya ciertos artículos como la casa donde vive, sus muebles, un automóvil, un panteón o \$1,500 en una cuenta para entierro.

Y

- Usted es un individuo con un ingreso mensual de menos de **\$1,031 o menos*** o una pareja con un ingreso mensual de **\$1,384 o menos***.

NOTA: Algunos estados pueden tener requisitos más generosos de ingresos y/o recursos.

Llame a su oficina local o estatal de asistencia médica (Medicaid), servicios sociales o de bienestar público, estos números aparecen en las páginas azules (gubernamentales) de su guía telefónica y pida información sobre los programas que ayudan a pagar los gastos de Medicare. Es muy importante que llame si piensa que es elegible a cualquiera de estos Programas de Ahorros de Medicare, aún si no está seguro.

Jo Anne B. Barnhart
Comisionada
Social Security Administration

Thomas A. Scully
Administrador
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

*Los límites de ingreso cambiarán un poco en el 2004. Si usted vive en Alaska o Hawaii, los límites de ingresos son un poco más altos.

For help with your Medicare questions, visit www.medicare.gov or call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.