

Talking Points for Donna Harvey

- Thank you for your gracious introduction Frank. My name is Donna Harvey and I am the Executive Director for the Hawkeye Valley Area Agency on Aging in Waterloo, Iowa. I am also the current President of the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging.
- Having been part of the Aging Services Network for 30 years, I am delighted to meet with other members of the network as well as members of the SHIP network today. We all have been through a lot together!
- I too thank you for joining us on this call.
- I also want to thank Dr. McClellan and Assistant Secretary Carbonell for arranging this conference call. In listening to Dr. McClellan and Assistant Secretary discuss how important the partnership is between CMS and AoA at the national level, helps us see, now more than ever, our critical roles at the local level.
- The National Association of Area Agencies on Aging is the umbrella organization for the 655 area agencies on aging and more than 230 Title VI Native American aging programs in the U.S. These agencies coordinate and support a wide range of home- and community-based services, including information and referral, home-delivered and congregate meals, transportation, employment services, senior centers, adult day care and a long-term care ombudsman program.
- The partnership with AoA and CMS, the aging network and the SHIP network is a natural fit for n4a's guiding principles: to **Facilitate** cooperative relationships among the aging network, other public agencies, and private sector organizations to develop an accessible and comprehensive long term care supports.
- This is especially critical now as we work with older persons with Medicare and their caregivers over the next few months as they seek information and to enroll in prescription drug coverage.
- If older Americans and people with disabilities are to realize the full benefit of the 2006 Medicare prescription drug coverage, aging services network professionals who are the first point of contact for many seniors must be prepared with accurate information and the ability to relay that information effectively.
- We can't do this alone. As AoA and CMS and other Federal Agencies are coordinating their efforts on the national level, we need to coordinate with our local partners, most importantly the SHIPS, to best leverage our limited resources and complement the work each are doing.

- Over the years, the Aging Services Network has evolved to meet changing needs and expectations of our clients and now is the time to evolve yet again.
- As we often hear from older people, caregivers, members of Congress and local businesses, our networks are the trusted community resource. We have an opportunity here to work together and lead a comprehensive, coordinated effort to help people with Medicare make decisions about their new benefits and feel confident about those decisions.
- Many of us see the MMA as a challenge. I see this effort as an opportunity. This is an opportunity for all of us, the aging services network and the SHIP network and other partners to work for one common cause: the **Consumer**.

Thank you.