



NAME OF PROJECT: Guam State Health Insurance Assistance Program

NAME OF ORGANIZATION: Guam Department of Public Health and Social Services
Division of Senior Citizens (Guam State Office on Aging)

DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAM OR PROJECT

GUAM STATE HEALTH INSURANCE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

LOCALLY KNOWN AS THE GUAM MEDICARE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (GUAM MAP)

As a first time grant award recipient in fiscal year 2004, Guam's State Office on Aging, locally known as the Division of Senior Citizens within the Department of Public Health and Social Services, officially launched full-scale program implementation of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid's (CMS) State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) on December 20, 2004. Establishing a program name, other than SHIP, was deemed necessary as the island's territorial status with the United States of America had many islanders presuming that SHIP services, like many other federally funded programs, was not available to Guam residents. Therefore, SHIP is locally recognized as the Guam Medicare Assistance Program, or Guam MAP.

Since the establishment of this program and through several media activities announcing program services, program staff and dedicated volunteers have assisted thousands of the island's Medicare beneficiaries who would not normally receive or access accurate, timely or relevant health insurance information from off-island sources.

The ability to build Guam's capacity to provide information, assistance and counseling on Original Medicare, Medicare Part D and Medigap is a strength for the island's 12,000 Medicare benefactors as no other entity on the island is providing such a needed service. As a multi-ethnic community, there is a major language barrier, especially those who immigrate to the island from Asia and the Federate States of Micronesia. Thus, Guam MAP ensures its program activities encompass all ethnicities to the greatest extent possible through on-site and telephone counseling, prescription drug enrollment activities, group presentations, outreach events and translated program information.

KEY PARTNERS INVOLVED IN THIS EFFORT

Guam MAP has provided information, assistance and counseling services to thousands of Medicare beneficiaries to include those who are homebound and mentally challenged through partnerships with the Title III Aging Case Management Services Program (non-profit) and the Department of Mental Health and Social Services (government agency).

Case Workers and Social Workers from these two agencies are provided training and the tools needed to provide effective and efficient counseling to frail and impaired populations.

Additional partners who primarily assist Guam MAP by referring Medicare beneficiaries to the program and disseminating the latest Medicare information to beneficiaries within their programs include the other Title III Aging Program Service Providers/Vendor, Social Security Administration, various government agencies, namely Department of Administration, Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Department of Public Health and Social Services' Medicaid and Medically Indigent Program, Guam Housing and Urban Renewal Authority, GovGuam Retirement Fund and Village Mayors, dialysis centers, private health insurance companies and the American Association of Retired Persons, local chapter.

In 2006, Guam MAP succeeded in accomplishing the following 4 national SHIP objectives which earned the State Office on Aging a Performance Plus Award from CMS:

1. Provide locally-based individual counseling services to a greater number of individual beneficiaries unable to access other channels of information.
2. Increase targeted outreach to diverse and hard-to-reach population
3. Increase and enhance the counselor workforce
4. Increase local and State participation in CMS education and communication activities.

Guam MAP was especially honored to have received this award upon learning that only 13 out of 54 SHIPS located in all 50 states plus Washington, D.C., Puerto Rico, Guam and the Virgin Islands was bestowed this prestigious award. It was especially humbling for Program staff to also learn that Guam MAP was the only SHIP in Region 9 to be awarded the Performance Plus Award. As a result of maintaining its excellent performance level with improvement in a few areas, Guam MAP garnered another Performance Plus Award from CMS in 2007. This great accomplishment clearly affirms that Guam MAP has the capacity to provide locally accessible counseling services to our island's beneficiaries.

CONTACT PERSON

Mr. Arthur U. San Agustin, MHR

Senior Citizens Administrator

Phone: 671-735-7393

Fax: 671-735-7416

arthur.sanagustin@dphss.guam.gov