

Successful Outreach Methods with AI/AN Communities: Tips for Title VI Programs



Events

Ideas from past MIPPA grantees:

- Health fair with a booth and/or presentation about Medicare
- Tribal elder conference in conjunction with a larger pre-existing conference
- "Medicare day" in conjunction with the local county – guest speakers, people to answer questions and provide assistance with paperwork
- "Wellness gathering" – guest speakers on different topics related to elder needs, and exercise sessions, games, meals
- Webinars or town-halls
- Facebook Live – such as [this event by the Greater Lakes Inter-Tribal Council](#)
- Presentations at congregate meal sites
- Information tables at Indian Health Service centers, powwows, Tribal summits, and other community events, with a tri-fold info board, brochures, fact sheets, etc.
- One-on-one counseling sessions in partnership with the State Health Insurance Assistance Program
- [Medicare bingo](#) – incorporating Medicare facts, terms and information (can be done in a parking lot for social distancing)
- Placemats – provide a list of potential topics of discussion, and elders can select which interest them
- Drive-through event - distribute bags with promotional items and literature from various tribal and surrounding community programs, and boxed lunches
- Sponsor events – pass out informational materials/promotional items at events such as a wellness walk, tribal fair, conference, etc.

Did You Know?

You can utilize MIPPA funds for:

Refreshments/meals for a MIPPA outreach event; advertisement costs; Staff travel and transportation costs for elders to attend an outreach event

Materials

Informational materials could include:

- Overview of Medicare, Medicare savings, low-income subsidy, Medigap, preventative services
- Contact info for: MIPPA, your SHIP Office, your IHS Benefits Coordinator, anyone who can answer questions and assist with filling out forms
- FAQ sheet
- Calendars with key Medicare dates and preventative services information related to monthly commemorations (e.g. mammograms during Breast Cancer Awareness Month)
- [Videos from CMS](#)
- Tri-fold display
- PowerPoints, YouTube videos, or recorded short Facebook Live events on loop on TV in congregate meal areas or community centers

Promotional items could include:

- Tote bags/insulated bags
- T-shirts
- Hand sanitizer
- Masks
- Medication pill box
- Pens and notepads/folders
- Fridge magnet

Messaging Tips

- Be explicit about the amount they might save (e.g., Medicare Savings Programs can give you back \$170 each month)
 - Emphasize services/assistance is free ("We'll help you apply at no cost to you")
 - Emphasize how benefits can help elders remain independent and healthy
 - Explain the timing – "open enrollment" can be confusing
 - Clearly explain Medicare Advantage plans
 - Raise awareness about fraud and scams
 - [Utilize SHIP office](#) to provide unbiased information about Medicare to elders and their caregivers
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Outreach Strategies

Consider various outreach channels and identify the options that make the most sense for your target audience:

- Email or text communications
- Flyers/posters
- Add flyers to home-delivered meals
- Have flyers available at congregate meals or pick-up meal sites
- Posters in the clinic, senior/community centers, post office, casino or bingo hall, grocery store, bus kiosks, churches, etc.
- Radio – announcements or call-in hour for “Ask About Medicare” where listeners can get their questions answered
- Social media (i.e. tribe’s Facebook page)
- Word of mouth – event/network marketing: announce events at public meetings, social gatherings, and other events where elders congregate (e.g. church, traditional events, etc.)
- Local newspapers
- Partner with local community organizations – such as Patient Financial Assistance, Alternate Health Resources, Outreach and Enrollment, or other departments who are willing and able to assist elders.
- Implement an Ambassador Program to reach rural populations in their communities from a trusted source across Alaska such as Federally Facilitated Health Organizations, Tribal Health Centers, and Senior Centers.

Tips for Outreach

- Utilize places and media platforms frequented by elders
- Utilize your Elder Benefits Specialist, if possible – send a letter to everyone turning 65 each year to tell them the importance of enrolling in Medicare
- Elders are more likely to respond to face-to-face engagement so, whenever possible, communicate your message in-person to help build stronger relationships, boost the effectiveness of your outreach efforts, and ensure you’re getting your message across clearly and concisely.

Things to Consider

- Aim to write materials at an 8th grade reading level (or below). As we age, our reading comprehension and retention are impacted.
- Use larger font size, dark text on a light background, and leave white space around text.
- Include graphics and photos wherever possible, specifically to reflect your community (i.e. people and places/ landscape to reflect your area)