



## **Outreach Tips for Reaching New Audiences SMP Medicare Minutes**

Now that you have decided to participate in the SMP Medicare Minute program, you are ready to begin recruiting volunteers and reaching out to potential host organizations that serve people who have Medicare and are under 65. In order to help you identify volunteers and approach potential sites that will be a good fit for the SMP Medicare Minute program, the Medicare Rights Center has compiled some tips from current Medicare Minute partners. The Medicare Rights Center can also provide templates and other tools for reaching out to sites to host Medicare Minutes: please contact Scarlet Watts ([swatts@medicarerights.org](mailto:swatts@medicarerights.org) or 212-204-6285) for more information.

### **Recruiting Volunteers**

- Ask current volunteers to bring friends along to Volunteer Update meetings.
- Connect with disability-serving groups such as RSVPs, Centers for Independent Living, and ADRCs. These organizations may be able to provide volunteers or suggest good sites for SMP Medicare Minutes.
- Speak to individuals at your own local retiree or union meetings about the SMP Medicare Minute program (retired teachers are typically great volunteer presenters). You may want to ask if you can include a call for volunteers in their newsletter.
- If you are interested in recruiting volunteers to reach audiences with unique needs, such as hearing or vision impairment, consider speaking to local organizations and/or organized social groups that serve those populations. If they have regular newsletters, you may want to ask if you can include a call for volunteers in their next issue.
- Collaborate with local universities to draw in students (e.g., social work students, sociology students) who are interested in serving people with disabilities and older adults by presenting SMP Medicare Minutes in their communities or helping coordinate the program.
- Leverage your connections with various media outlets. For example, raise awareness about the SMP Medicare Minute program through local newspapers, TV or radio stations.
- Bring fliers explaining the volunteer opportunity to current SMP Medicare Minute presentations. Often, audience members may be interested in becoming volunteer presenters themselves.

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And of course, don't forget to let your current volunteers know how much they are appreciated! Some great suggestions for supporting volunteers included: awarding yearly certificates of appreciation, mailing holiday cards, and hosting gatherings.

### **Reaching a Variety of Audiences**

- Consider reaching homebound individuals by presenting the SMP Medicare Minute telephonically. Connect to a hub in your community (e.g., a community center or library) that may already provide telephone services to homebound clients. The program can be further promoted through services for homebound populations, such as Meals on Wheels.
- Ask any bilingual volunteers if they would be interested in translating and presenting the SMP Medicare Minute in languages other than English. Individuals who do not speak English as a first language may lack access to comprehensive Medicare information. Visit local community groups that serve populations who do not speak English as a first language to introduce the SMP Medicare Minute program, and ask your volunteers if they have any ties to these groups.
- Contact community-based organizations, faith-based institutions, and social groups that serve individuals with unique needs and see if they would be interested in participating in the SMP Medicare Minute program, by providing volunteers and/or hosting Medicare Minute presentations.

### **Next Steps**

- If you aren't already participating in the SMP Medicare Minute program and are interested in starting a program of your own, please contact Scarlet Watts at [swatts@medicarerights.org](mailto:swatts@medicarerights.org) for more information.
- If you are interested in reaching out to new types of audiences and would like more guidance on how to pursue these opportunities, feel free to contact Scarlet Watts for more tips and outreach strategies.

### **ABOUT THE MEDICARE RIGHTS CENTER**

The Medicare Rights Center is a national, nonprofit consumer service organization that works to ensure access to affordable health care for older adults and people with disabilities through counseling and advocacy, educational programs, and public policy initiatives.

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