

Mysteries of Medicare – Medicare Help during COVID-19

Help is available for your Medicare questions through the Chester County Department of Aging's APPRISE Medicare Counseling Program.

APPRISE, the State Health Insurance Assistance Program ("SHIP") of Pennsylvania, can help you to understand your health care coverage options so you can make sound choices - both when new to Medicare and on an ongoing basis. APPRISE counselors are specially-trained and certified volunteers who can answer questions about Medicare, Medigap plans, Medicare Advantage Plans, Medicare Prescription Plans, and more. Our services are free, confidential and unbiased. In Chester County, APPRISE operates under the Chester County Department of Aging Services. We are funded through the Administration for Community Living under the US Department of Health and Human Services.

Most people are overwhelmed by the deluge of information sent to them when they become Medicare eligible or need help with understanding Medicare. A "Medicare 101" PowerPoint is provided on the Department of Aging's APPRISE Program webpage <https://chesco.org/477/Apprise-Medicare-Counseling> along with other self-help resources.

Our services go beyond your initial enrollment; we can help you file an appeal if a claim is denied, help low income individuals apply for and navigate various assistance programs such as Medicaid and PACE, and generally answer your questions on Medicare and related health insurance. During this unprecedented time of "Stay-at-Home" due to the pandemic, we continue to offer one-on-one phone counseling with an APPRISE counselor through our Helpline 610-344-5004 option 2, and through email (apprisechesco@outlook.com). When emailing us, please include APPRISE in the subject line and provide your phone number in case your questions are more easily answered with a phone call.

Currently all in-person presentations and counseling locations are closed. Virtual presentations of Medicare 101 are currently scheduled for the Downingtown Library on May 13 (5:30-7:30 PM), Henrietta Hankin Library on May 18 (6:00-7:30 PM) and Phoenixville Library on May 18 (7:00-8:30 PM). You can register for these presentations by going to the specific library event site.