

SPECIAL INSURE MORE PEOPLE EDITION

Medications More Affordable with Assistance from Senior Services of Southeastern Virginia by Rick Spencer

Dorothy Norris did not have a choice – \$451 per month for 30 doses of prescribed cancer medication was too much for her family’s fixed income.

Fortunately, MedCare Access Specialist Brenda Lawrence came to the rescue. A pharmacist in the Windsor Pharmacy referred Mrs. Norris and her husband, George, to Ms. Lawrence, when he realized they were paying too much for medications. The MedCare Access Program is administered by Senior Services of Southeastern Virginia with grant funding from the Obici Healthcare Foundation.

Upon learning about their plight, Ms. Lawrence made a commitment to help the Norrises reduce their prescription costs.

And she made good on that promise. After carefully matching their household income with provisions in Medicare Part D, the cancer drug went from \$436 to \$6.50. Upon further review, she reduced all household medication expenses from \$1,200 to \$200 per month.

Ms. Lawrence didn’t stop there. Premium payments made by Mr. and Mrs. Norris to Medicare Part B and Part D went from \$32.40 and \$110.50 per month, respectively, to zero.

Furthermore, Ms. Lawrence helped the Western Tidewater couple recoup \$600 from the insurance company that had been overcharging them.



MedAccess Specialist Brenda Lawrence (center) saved George and Nancy Norris thousands of dollars by helping them reduce their medication costs.

“A lot of seniors don’t realize they are eligible for these Medicare benefits,” Ms. Lawrence said. “Many will become eligible, because their income goes down after they retire.”

The MedCare Access program assists people who are eligible for the Medicare Part D Low-Income Subsidy benefit known as “Extra Help.” This program helps newly eligible Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries and seniors 60 and older who need assistance with home care and access to medical care.

Request for Proposals Announcement

Tuesday, May 10, 2011 8:30 a.m.

Hilton Garden Inn
100 Constance Ave., Suffolk

Keynote Speaker: Karen Remley, MD
Commissioner, Virginia Department of Health

REGISTER at www.obicihcf.org by May 3, 2011

KAREN REMLEY, MD
COMMISSIONER, VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH



Dr. Karen Remley is the principal public health advisor to the Governor, Secretary of Health and Human Resources, the Virginia General Assembly and the Board of Health whose mission is to promote and protect the health of all Virginians.

Health Insurance: A Key Indicator of Good Health

by Joyce H. Trump

There are as many as 13.5% of children and 23.5% of adults in Western Tidewater without healthcare insurance, according to the Virginia Healthcare Foundation. Connecting residents with insurance is important, because having health insurance is an important marker for health status.

This health insurance gap is a problem across the Commonwealth, as one million Virginians (15%) are uninsured. Unfortunately, many people are eligible to receive insurance but are not enrolled.

Research from the Institute of Medicine states that “children benefit considerably from health insurance. When children acquire insurance, they are more likely to have access to a usual source of care; well-child care and immunizations to prevent future illness and monitor development milestones and prescription medications; appropriate care for asthmas; and basic dental services.”

There is a link between academic performance and good health for children. There are also connections between good health and productivity and quality of life for adults. Given these conditions that call for more access to health insurance, the Obici Healthcare

“When I was Superintendent of Suffolk Public Schools, I observed a link between academic performance and good health for children. There are also connections between good health and productivity and quality of life for adults,” said Joyce Trump, member of the Obici Healthcare Foundation Board of Directors and former Superintendent of Suffolk Public Schools.



Joyce H. Trump

Foundation Board of Directors identified *Insure More People* as a Strategic Priority.

As part of this priority, five agencies received funding to enroll more children and adults in health insurance programs. These agencies are utilizing programs such as Family Access to Medical Insurance Security (FAMIS) and various insurance options for adults (e.g., Medicaid and Medicare Part B and/or D).

The Foundation is confident that this concerted effort to *Insure More People* will successfully close the insurance gap for eligible recipients and, consequently, improve access to quality healthcare.

FOUNDATION EXPECTS TO ENROLL 400 PEOPLE

The Obici Healthcare Foundation has identified *Insure More People* as a Strategic Priority. Organizations funded in Western Tidewater will add 400 people to FAMIS, Medicaid and Medicare Part B and/or D rolls during the current, yearlong funding cycle. The following is a list of grantee names and contact information:

Catholic Charities of Eastern

Virginia

Kathy Dial - 456-2366

Smart Beginnings of Western

Tidewater

Ellen Couch - 562-7982

Main Street Physicians*

Tina Williams - 380-8709 ext. 4

Suffolk Department of Social Services

Susan Pruitt or Azeez Felder - 514-7470

Senior Services of Southeastern

Virginia

Mary Howell - 963-9220

Virginia Legal Aid Society

Randi Blumenson

539-3441

Catholic Charities, Main Street Physicians, Smart Beginnings and Suffolk Department of Social Services place a special emphasis on enrolling children in FAMIS.

**Main Street Physicians is not a grantee but is working in tandem with Foundation grantees by coordinating enrollment efforts.*