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Missouri Association of Area Agencies On Aging (MA4) Chosen As Health Insurance Navigators For Second Year

Navigators Will Serve As Local Resource for New Health Insurance Marketplace Enrollees

Jefferson City, Mo. -- Catherine Edwards, executive director of the Missouri Association of Area Agencies on Aging (MA4), today announced the Missouri Association of Area Agencies on Aging (MA4) has been named by the Department of Health and Human Services as an official Health Insurance Marketplace “Navigator” organization for the second straight year. MA4 will incorporate its network of Area Agencies on Aging and senior centers throughout the state to help people make informed decisions when choosing among health insurance coverage options offered through the Health Insurance Marketplace.

“Last year, more than 150,000 Missourians chose health insurance options offered through the Health Insurance Marketplace,” said Edwards. “While most people accessed the Marketplace online at www.HealthCare.gov, many people selecting health insurance coverage for the first time benefitted from the in-person service our team of trained Navigators was able to provide.”

According to Edwards, individuals and small businesses will once again be able to shop for health insurance coverage through the Health Insurance Marketplace in a variety of ways

including online, in-person, by phone and at events and locations established by partner organizations during the open enrollment period.

For individuals wishing to explore new insurance options in person MA4 has established eight regional information centers in all parts of the state. Additional events will also be hosted throughout the state during the open enrollment period. The Open Enrollment period for individuals interested in Health Insurance Marketplace coverage for 2015 will begin this year on November 15. Additionally, Missouri has been named as one of 5 states that will allow businesses with fewer than 50 full-time workers to access the Small Business Health Options Program in late October, ahead of the regular open enrollment start date.

“Full details regarding plan options, pricing and participation are not yet available,” said Edwards, “but, our network is in place and will be prepared to help once details for the 2014 enrollment period are released.”

Under the Health Insurance Marketplace system, affordable health insurance policies will be offered by multiple private insurance providers with tiered cost options. Coverage cannot be denied due to pre-existing conditions and many preventive health care services are provided under terms of the policies offered in the Marketplace. The system is designed to help currently uninsured Missourians find affordable health insurance options for themselves and their families.

About The Missouri Association of Area Agencies on Aging (MA4)

The Missouri Association of Area Agencies on Aging (MA4) was founded in 1973 to serve as a statewide advocate and resource for older Missourians. MA4 is comprised of the state’s 10 Area Agencies on Aging (AAA), which were created under the 1973 amendments to the Older American’s Act of 1965. For 40 years, these local agencies have been providing vital services, programs and information to millions of Missourians and their caregivers, including legal services, home-delivered meals, disease prevention and health promotion, transportation, public benefits counseling, senior center services and activities and in-home services. The 10 Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) provide a coordinated network of care in implementing statewide initiatives, which are designed to help older Missourians maintain their independence and give them a voice in articulating their concerns and changing needs.

As the official statewide association of these agencies, MA4 is dedicated to carrying out its mission of service, information and advocacy to improve the lives of older Missourians and to

plan for the changes that will take place as the aging population grows in number and importance in the next decade.

In 2013 MA4 was recognized as one of two Navigator organizations in Missouri charged with providing access to the newly formed Health Insurance Marketplace. Despite the organization's focus on senior health and wellness, all services provided by MA4 under the Marketplace program will continue to be available to all Missourians, regardless of age.

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