



WACCAMAW REVIEW

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Medicare Open Enrollment: Free help available through Dec. 7

Free help is available for Medicare beneficiaries trying to navigate the open enrollment period, which began in October and ends on Dec. 7.

Waccamaw Regional Council of Governments, the dedicated Area Agency on Aging, is offering open enrollment assistance by appointment for any individual who qualifies for Medicare benefits through the open enrollment closing date.

Open enrollment is a once-a-year opportunity for Medicare beneficiaries to review their plan options for the upcoming calendar year and make changes to their coverage. Finding the right plan or figuring out if the plan you have is the one that best suits your needs can be confusing and frustrating for many individuals, said Kim Harmon, Waccamaw Regional's Aging Director. She and her staff can make the process easier.



"There are several parts to Medicare and a myriad of choices to be made for beneficiaries," Harmon said. There are traditional packages, packages designed for people with certain diseases, and of course, Medicare Part D for prescription drugs.

During an appointment, staff will conduct an assessment, talking with the individual about specific health issues and needs and getting a list of all the prescription drugs the person is taking. That in-

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The Murrells Inlet watershed plan steering committee is pictured reviewing a watershed map.

Inlet watershed plan gets statewide attention

Since the completion of a watershed plan for the Murrells Inlet estuary this past April, the Waccamaw Regional Council of Governments, along with its project partners, have received positive feedback across the state for their efforts.

Partners involved in the planning project included Murrells Inlet 2020, Horry County and Georgetown County Stormwater Departments, Coastal Carolina University, and the Earthworks Group, Inc. The watershed plan primarily focuses on the fecal coliform bacteria impairments in Murrells Inlet, which is classified as a Shellfish Harvesting Water by the SC Department of Health and Environmental Control.

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Training offered for planning officials

South Carolina state law requires appointed planning officials, including anyone serving on a planning commission, architectural review board, board of zoning appeals, and staff to attend trainings annually.

Newly appointed officials must attend six hours of orientation training, while veteran officials are required to attend three hours of continuing education training on planning-related topics.

Waccamaw Regional has been a host and facilitator of these trainings for several years. We will offer the six-hour orientation training in our conference room in two parts during the month of November. Part One will be offered Wednesday, Nov. 12, at 6 p.m. Part Two is one week later on Nov. 19 at 6 p.m.

This training is approved by the SC Planning Education Advisory Committee.

To sign up or for more information, contact Daniel Newquist, (843) 436-6131 or dnewquist@wrcog.org.

Assisted Rides program gets national award, donation

A Waccamaw Regional Council of Governments program that helps residents in Georgetown, Horry and Williamsburg counties get where they need to go recently received national recognition.

The Assisted Rides program, offered through the council's Aging and Disability Resource Center, was named a recipient of the 2014 Innovation Award from the National Association of Development Organizations. The program utilizes volunteers to help clients get to medical appointments, the grocery store, worship services and other locations important to their daily lives. This approach helps special populations continue living independently in their own homes instead of being forced into assisted living facilities.

The program was introduced in 2013 and has since provided more than 7,100 rides, utilizing 74 volunteer drivers.

"This program is a wonderful benefit to our community, because we have so many seniors and people with disabilities in need who don't have access to transportation, espe-



Linda Bonesteel, left, director of the Georgetown Community Care Network, Georgetown Hospital System, presents a \$3,000 check to Trina Cason of Waccamaw Regional for its Assisted Rides program. The donation from Georgetown Hospital System will be used to provide long distance incentives for drivers taking passengers to medical appointments more than 40 miles one way.

cially in the rural areas of our region," said Sarah Smith, Waccamaw Regional executive director.

Volunteers are always needed for the program. To volunteer or for information, call Trina Cason, (843) 436-2110, or email tcason@wrcog.org.

Soft Skills Corner: Do I still need a résumé?

By Kenneth McIver
WIA Workshop Facilitator

On several occasions, I've had participants come into one of my workshops asking, "Why do I need to write a résumé? None of the jobs I've applied to request one." That is certainly possible because most entry-level positions only ask for a completed application. But résumés are still an important tool for competing and securing employment at all levels and should be the first step when beginning your job search process.

When searching for employment, a résumé should be written to help organize your thoughts and focus on acquired skills and accomplishments, and align those identifiable skills with

the requested qualifications from a job description.

Broadly, a résumé consists of your contact information, your employment history and your educational background. From this information, a hiring manager can gather a number of qualities about you and how you might perform in a particular job. Are you a good salesman? Are you detail-oriented? Are you ambitious? The manner in which this information is presented, what is included and how well it is written are critical components that assist employers in determining job performance.

Importantly, you want your résumé to provide an impressive format to get noticed. As more and more job

seekers attempt to get their résumés noticed in today's technology-driven era, I have come across many creative and innovative techniques intended to do just that. From fully-scripted video productions and impressive LinkedIn profiles to imaginative PowerPoint presentations and infographic résumés that clearly took a great deal of time to put together, tech-savvy job applicants are pushing the boundaries. And while someone in web design or a number of professions in visual or creative arts would want to show their skills by using such mediums, a well-written, well-constructed résumé is still the equalizing tool employers use to compare candidates. The bottom line is yes, résumés are still a very important tool when seeking employment.



Part of the Murrells Inlet watershed is shown in the photo above.

Watershed

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Presently, approximately 736 acres of the 3,108 available shellfish acreage is restricted to harvesting activities due to fecal coliform impairments. The watershed plan prioritizes specific areas within Murrells Inlet to target stormwater management strategies to help improve water quality.

Other watershed-wide initiatives are also proposed, including pet waste disposal and oyster shell recycling campaigns. The Waccamaw Regional Council

of Governments applied for and received a SC DHEC 319 grant of \$162,000 to install demonstration best management practices improvements in Murrells Inlet.

In October, planning staff member Daniel Newquist gave presentations on the Murrells Inlet Watershed Planning project at the SC Water Resources Conference in Columbia, and the SC American Planning Association Conference in North Myrtle Beach.

To view the Murrells Inlet Watershed Plan, visit Waccamaw Regional’s website at: <http://wrcog.org/transportation-planning/air-quality-coalition/>

Grant workshop set for November

Waccamaw Regional Council of Governments will host a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) informational workshop on Thursday, Nov. 13.

Representatives from all non-entitlement units of local government within the three-county region are invited to join us from 10 a.m. to noon to discuss the upcoming CDBG funding round, changes in the process, and project development.

Staff will be available to answer questions and to arrange a time to further discuss potential projects. Anyone interested in attending the session or looking for more information is asked to contact Laura Adams, ladams@wrcog.org or (843) 436-6129.

Open enrollment

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formation is used to find a list of plans available in the area that meet the individual’s needs. From there, Waccamaw Regional staff can work with an individual to help them determine

what plan is the best option for them, factoring in price.

“It’s a more specific, person-centered type of assistance than what they get if they call 1-800-Medicare or go online. Those do-it-yourself options work for some people, but for someone who needs a little extra help, we provide that. We offer a better, more in-depth assessment of the person’s needs and help them make sure they’re getting what they need. We go that extra mile for folks.”

Staff can also provide guidance to those looking for financial assistance for Medicare Part D.

Need Help
with your **Medicare**
Plan Comparisons
for Open Enrollment?



Appointments are available from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, from 5:30-8 p.m. on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, and every other Saturday (Nov. 1, Nov. 15, Nov. 29, and Dec. 6) from 9 a.m. to 3

p.m. More than 80 people have already received help through this program this year.

Waccamaw Regional normally assists anywhere from 300 to 500 individuals per year with selecting Medicare packages. This free service is available to anyone who qualifies for Medicare.

For more information about Waccamaw Regional Council of Governments and its Aging and Disability programs, visit www.wrcog.org, or contact Kim Harmon at (843) 546-8502 or kharmon@wrcog.org.

New program provides legal aid for seniors

A new service is available to qualifying senior citizens in the Waccamaw region who need legal advice.

While the program does not base eligibility solely on income or resources, the program directs services to those 60 or older who:

- Are in the greatest social and/or economic need,
- Have limited English-speaking ability,
- Are members of a minority group and live in a rural area.

Case priorities include: income, health care, long term care, nutrition, housing, utilities, protective services, defense of guardianship, abuse, neglect and age discrimination.

For more information, contact Kayla Ives, I&RA Specialist, at (843) 436-6252 or kives@wrcog.org.

Our WIA career coaches at work!

Fall is the season of cooler weather, pumpkins, and of course, festivals.

Our Workforce Investment Act career coaches are participating in many of these festivals throughout the communities of Georgetown, Horry and Williamsburg counties. The goal is to recruit new participants into the WIA program and also raise awareness about the program itself and the services offered.

Whether it is at the Loris Bog Off, the Conway Fall Festival, the Kingstree Pig Pickin' or outside of Walmart, our career coaches are spreading the word about WIA, which provides activities designed to enhance



Career Coaches Sharon Johnson, Eva Porchea and Thenthy Anderson (from left), are pictured at the Kingstree Pig Pickin' Festival.

the employability, occupational attainment, retention, earnings and skills training of adults, dislocated workers and youth.

For more information about the program, visit www.wrcog.org.



1230 Highmarket Street
Georgetown, S.C. 29440

Phone: (843) 546-8502
Fax: (843) 527-2302



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