

Testimonial Transcript: SHIP Volunteer Charles Reese

I can feel on the phone when I talk to people and I can save them a hundred dollars here or a hundred dollars there - I can feel them smiling. I can feel them feeling a little better about life, and I think that's very important.

I've been Medicare volunteer for 12 years - 12 years. And one of the things I find, that once they start to reach that age of 65 or 62 and they're going for Social Security, they're going for their Medicare - they really find that there's some challenges there that really need assistance; and that's where the Medicaid and Medicare assistance program comes in. I find that, you know, a lot of folks are isolated, a lot of folks are struggling, and a lot of folks are entitled based on their income for a lot of these programs, but they don't know. And one of the advantages, one of the things that I feel good about, is that when you can go in and you can talk to a person who is paying a Part B premium but their income qualifies for that to be waived - I mean, you can almost hear the joy and relief on the phone. Once you put that through - you fill out the application, and those people now have a little extra income to buy a few more groceries or do something that enhances their quality of life -- that's very, very rewarding.

The need is never going to stop. They can call us. We can actually help them navigate through the system. And believe me, sometimes it really takes that navigation for them to get a full benefit of a lot of programs, especially now that their income is fixed. There's a lot of choices. And what we do is just to assist them in terms of helping them make the choice. They make their choices, but we show them all the options. We're all going to get old. As we age there's no escaping dealing with the healthcare system or the economic system. You'll feel good about helping others navigate the system.

I think that if you go through the training. You give it a chance. You'll see the value, not only for yourself, but you also see the value in others who you are able to assist.

State Health Insurance Assistance Programs. Available in your area. Local, unbiased, and trusted Medicare help. Visit www.shiptacenter.org for more information. Depending on your area, the SHIP program may also be known by one of these names.

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