

Testimonial Transcript: SHIP Volunteer Jennie Anderson

What I'm doing now is a good reason for me to get up in the morning. It makes me feel good about myself. It lets me know that I'm helping people make their lives better. I was lost. I needed to have something and I had always been a people person. I talked with people all the time, but I needed to have something to keep my brain working and to stretch my mind a little bit and still be able to give back to people.

I don't get paid for this. I'm a volunteer, and I get more out of doing this than what I did on a paycheck for 36 years. I feel better about myself. I feel more useful - not that what I did was not important, but that was working for a paycheck and this is working for me. I am doing this because I want to make a difference.

I got the Medicare & You handbook every year like everybody that 65 and older does, and I started reading in it and would get in five or six pages and was just, "Ah, I can't get this; I don't know what it's talking about," and after working with SHIP and going through their training programs, this last year I read through the book cover-to-cover and understood it all.

How can I afford my drugs? That is uppermost in their minds because medication has just skyrocketed, as we all know, and without having the proper drug coverage, they have to make the choice between am I going to go to the grocery store and put food on the table, or am I going to go to the drugstore and pick up my medication? And nobody, no American should have to make that kind of a choice. One of the things that I tell to most clients when I'm talking to them on the phone the first time is that I will do whatever I can do to put the care back in Medicare.

The more I talk to people and see what I can do for them, I'm able to help those people, and that makes me very comfortable with where I am in my life right now. And I'm not too old to do the job anymore, that I am still worthwhile for something. It's just having them stand up at the end of the session and instead of reaching out a hand to thank you, they've got their arms open to hug you. It's a great feeling.

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.

This testimonial was supported in part by a grant (No. 90ST1001) from the Administration for Community Living (ACL), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). Grantees carrying out projects under government sponsorship are encouraged to express freely their findings and conclusions. Therefore, points of view or opinions do not necessarily represent official ACL or DHHS policy.