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Missouri Association of Area Agencies on Aging (MA4) Chosen as Health Insurance Navigators for Third 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 third straight year. “The exciting news about this award is that it is for three years allowing added continuity in the service we provide Missourians,” said Edwards. 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, 253,000 Missourians chose health insurance options offered through the Health Insurance Marketplace,” said Edwards. “While many people accessed the Marketplace online at www.HealthCare.gov, others selecting health insurance coverage for the first time benefitted from the in-person service our team of trained Navigators was able to provide.”

Alongside its Navigator work, MA4 has been active in the Cover Missouri Coalition, with 725 member organizations seeking to reduce the number of uninsured Missourians, build awareness, assist with enrollment, increase health insurance literacy, and support Medicaid transformation. MA4 has already brought over \$1.7 million of federal funding into Missouri, creating opportunities to help Missourians gain health insurance.

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 2016 will begin this year on November 1.

“We are able to provide over 70 navigators through our network who are prepared to help with 2016 enrollment once details for the 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 over 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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