

Senior GAZETTE

Fall 2020

by Lynda Ashley, Director, Amherst Township Senior Service Office (ATSSO)

MEDICARE OPEN ENROLLMENT

This year, Open Enrollment for the 2021 plan year starts October 15th and ends December 7th.

During open enrollment time, seniors are encouraged to compare their present prescription plan with plans offered for 2021, however, all “face to face” Medicare counseling is cancelled through the end of the year per the Ohio Department of Insurance. The Ohio Senior Health Insurance Information Program (**OSHIIP**), a division of the Department of Insurance, will conduct virtual “Medicare Check-Up Day Webinars” prior to the start of Open Enrollment.

Webinars will be held Monday through Thursday, September 14 through October 14. Sessions are available at 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. each day with an additional 6:00 p.m. session on Wednesdays.

***Monday webinars will focus on “MyCare Ohio” plans.**

To view a complete listing of “Medicare Check-Up Day Webinars”, visit OSHIIP's Registration page at:

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/rt/4987248812118591502>

➤ **Participants will need a computer, reliable internet, and a phone.**

ATSSO OFFICE HOURS:

8:00 A.M. – NOON (M-F)

Phone: 988-5894 – Ext. 101

Email: amhersttwpseniors@gmail.com

Medicare beneficiaries may also schedule a one-on-one counseling virtual session with an OSHIIP representative through Medicare's online scheduling portal at:

<https://ohiomedicarecounseling.as.me>

or by calling Lynda Ashley at the Amherst Township Senior Service Office at 988-5894 Ext. 101.

During Medicare's annual Open Enrollment, Ohioans can:

- Stay on Original Medicare and shop for a stand-alone “Part D” prescription drug plan.
- Select a Medicare Advantage Plan, which provides comprehensive health benefits, typically including prescription drug coverage. “Part D” and “Medicare Advantage” plans can change every year. The plan that was best for you in 2020 may not be the best plan for you in 2021. (***This is the first open enrollment period that people with “End-Stage Kidney Failure” [ESRD] may enroll into a “Medicare Advantage” plan for 2021.**)

- Determine if their existing coverage will continue to meet their health insurance needs.
- Learn more about recent Medicare updates and financial assistance programs that help pay prescription drug costs and “Part B” premiums by attending a virtual “Medicare Check-Up Day Webinar”.

Those unable to attend a “Medicare Check-Up Day Webinar” can contact OSHIIP at: **1-800-686-1578**

Mon. thru Fri. – 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.,
or

Medicare at **1-800-MEDICARE** (1-800-633-4227), 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Information, including specific plan details, is available at www.medicare.gov.

Protecting against Fraud and Identity Theft

During open enrollment, Department of Insurance Interim Director Tynesian Dorsey advises Ohioans to be aware of predatory sales practices and Medicare scams, such as unsolicited calls from scammers asking for personal information, such as your Social Security number or Medicare number. If consumers suspect wrongdoing, they should call the department's “Fraud and Enforcement Hotline” at:

1-800-686-1527

or the “Senior Medicare Patrol” at:

1-800-488-6070

For more insurance tips and information, visit www.insurance.ohio.gov or call the “Department of Insurance” at:

1-800-686-1526

Mon. thru Fri. – 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., to speak to a representative.

For additional information, follow the department on **Facebook** and **Twitter**.

***taken from Ohio Department of Insurance’s Press Release on September 8, 2020 titled “Virtual Medicare Check-Up Days”*

SEASONAL FLU

Get your flu shot each year for your best protection through the peak flu season in Northeast Ohio. To make an appointment for a flu shot in November, call LCPH vaccine clinics at **440-284-3206**.

For more information about Lorain County Public Health Vaccine Clinics visit their website at:

www.loraincounyhealth.com/vaccines

The Lorain County Health Department is located at 9880 South Murray Ridge Road, Elyria. Their phone number is **440-322-6367** and hours of operation are Mon. thru Fri. from 8 am to 4:30 pm.

MEAL PROGRAM OPTIONS

Amherst Township’s meal program ended February 28, 2020. If you are a senior citizen and would like to receive home delivered meals, below are a few organizations that service our area:

- “Amherst Office on Aging” offers a daily meal delivery. For more information or to enroll please call 440-988-2817.
- “Simply EZ” offers daily meals delivered once a week. These are vacuum sealed, ready to heat meals; just keep in the fridge until you want to eat. For more information or to enroll please call 1-800-800-9929.
- “Neighborhood Alliance” offers a daily meal delivery. Cost is based on income, but, there is a waiting list. For more details or to enroll please call 440-277-8269 ext 6214.