



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

**Press Release**

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GOVERNOR

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**SAGE PLUS PROGRAM OFFERS HELP IN COMPARING AND ENROLLING IN MEDICARE PART D**

HONOLULU -- The Hawaii State Department of Health, Executive Office on Aging's Sage PLUS Program is offering help to those with Medicare during the Medicare Part D Annual Coordinated Election Period from November 15, 2006 – December 31, 2006. For most people with Medicare this is their only opportunity to change, add or drop a Medicare Part D plan.

Medicare, the Executive Office on Aging, and the Sage PLUS Program encourage elective changes to Medicare Part D be made by Friday, December 8, 2006. Pat Sasaki, Director of the Executive Office on Aging said, "Making your elective changes by December 8<sup>th</sup> will provide an easy transition between plans and ensure a person may pick up their prescription drugs on January 1, 2007."

The Sage PLUS Program will be offering informational sessions from November 20 - December 12, 2006 throughout the state to assist people with comparing and enrolling in a plan. Session locations, dates and times are posted at [http://calendar.yahoo.com/hawaii/medicare\\_d](http://calendar.yahoo.com/hawaii/medicare_d)

Prior to attending a session, it is **very** important for members with Medicare Part D coverage to read their "Annual Notice of Change" from the prescription drug plan. This will notify a person of any changes to their plan in regards to premiums, deductible, formulary (drugs) changes for 2007. They should also make a list of all their prescription drugs including dosage and quantity.

(more)

Many people in Hawaii may have coverage from a retirement plan, Veteran Administration benefits, or their or their spouse's active employer group health plan. If their coverage is "creditable" or as good as Medicare, then they do not need to enroll in Medicare Part D at this time. Individuals are notified by their plan administrator (not the health plan) on whether or not their coverage is creditable. Questions about whether coverage is creditable should be directed to an individual's specific retirement plan (federal retirees received information in their "Summary of Benefits for 2007").

For other questions, or for a Medicare Part D comparison form, the Sage PLUS Program has a toll-free hotline manned by certified volunteers. **Call the Sage PLUS Program at (808) 586-7299 or toll-free at 1-888-875-9229.** At times, callers may be asked to leave their name, phone number and the island they are calling from and a volunteer will return their call within two working days. For additional activities log on to [http://calendar.yahoo.com/hawaiiicare\\_d](http://calendar.yahoo.com/hawaiiicare_d)

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For more information the media may contact:

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