

PROMISING PRACTICE TIPS: ENGAGING CONSUMERS THROUGH FUN AND INTERACTIVE GAMES



This tip sheet focuses on promising practices that agencies use to conduct education and outreach to inform consumers about benefits, such as the Medicare low-income subsidies, SNAP (the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program), and LIHEAP (the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program).

The purpose of this tip sheet is to share practices that agencies are using to educate consumers, their experiences using those resources, and considerations for other agencies interested in using similar practices.

Engagement with Fun and Interactive Games

Care Connection for Aging Services is an Area Agency on Aging (AAA) that serves 13 West Central Missouri counties. Care Connection recognized that people are more likely to engage and participate when educational activities are fun. As a result, for the past several years Care Connection

has been using a variety of games in their education and outreach to consumers. Two of their games, Wheel of Benefits and Benefits Bingo, specifically aim to provide education on several benefits including the Medicare low-income subsidies, SNAP, and LIHEAP.

Care Connection hosts these games at senior centers and other events taking place around the community, such as at city hall, libraries, and housing events. They also bring the games to “Fit and Fun”, which is similar to a health fair but includes many interactive games and prizes.

How Does Wheel of Benefits and Benefits Bingo Work?

Wheel of Benefits borrows a spinning wheel design from popular game shows. Participants spin the wheel. After the wheel lands on a benefit, they are asked a question and if they get the answer right, they receive a prize. To make their Wheel of Benefits, Care Connection ordered a spinning wheel online. They printed and cut out images for each benefit, and then pasted the pictures onto the wheel. Care Connection researched five to six questions and answers per benefit, and they created a binder with the questions and answers.



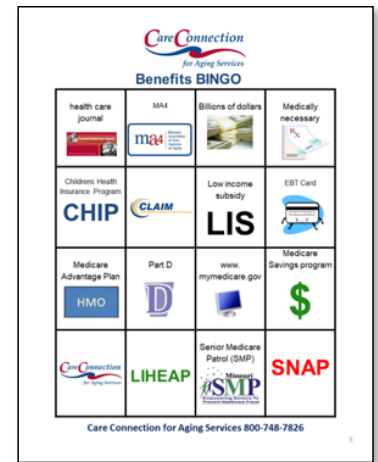
Sample Game Questions

- Q:** These programs assist lower income individuals with Medicare costs.
- A:** Medicare Savings Programs
- Q:** This program through Social Security pays prescription plan premiums for basic Part D plans, deductibles, and co-payments.
- A:** Low-Income Subsidy (LIS)
- Q:** This program offers nutrition assistance to low-income individuals.
- A:** SNAP

For Benefits Bingo, participants are asked a question and given an opportunity to find the answer on their bingo card. Participants are then given clues as to what benefit on their bingo card they are looking for, and this also opens it up for discussion. Participants can then place a bean or token on the correct answer. To make the game, Care Connection made about 40 bingo cards with paper and they laminated each card. They included the same pictures for benefits that are used in the Wheel of Benefits. Colored tokens or beans can be used to mark the correct spots.

Wheel of Benefits and Benefits Bingo offer opportunities for staff to provide education and outreach about benefits. Care Connection has found that the interactive games foster personal discussion and explanations of programs that often do not occur at formal presentations and health fairs. Participants can ask questions and staff can share further information and resources. The games help to facilitate dialogue about benefits between the staff and participants.

For both games, Care Connection will update the questions and answers as needed. Additionally, before playing the games with participants, Care Connection will test the questions amongst staff to make sure that the questions are understandable. Testing helps staff realize if they need to re-write questions to ensure that they are challenging enough but not too challenging.



What is the Impact of the Fun and Interactive Games?

Care Connection believes that it is important to think outside of the box when brainstorming ways to promote information that will connect with different types of learners. They have noticed that participants are more likely to engage and ask questions while playing games. Care Connection has also found that people enjoy Benefits Bingo and Wheel of Benefits and learn more by having an interactive experience.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Care Connection for Aging Services
106 W. Young, P.O. Box 1078
Warrensburg, MO 64093
800-748-7826
Website: <https://goaging.org/>