



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Medicare Annual Election Period Is Changing**  
***What you need to know that will affect your enrollment planning***

**November 10th, Federal Way, WA.** - This fall, the Annual Medicare Election Period for 2011 health insurance coverage is limited to November 15 through December 31.

Unlike years past, after December 31 Medicare eligible consumers will not be able to select a new Medicare Advantage plan or change their present plan other than to disenroll from their Medicare Advantage plan and enroll with original Medicare. That means the amount of time consumers have to enroll in a plan best suited for their needs is more limited.

For some seniors their current health plan may not be available in 2011. Many Private Fee for Service Medicare Advantage plans are choosing to leave our area. Some consumers may have already received a notice concerning disenrollment from their present plan. Puget Sound Health Partners (PSHP) recommends that consumers looking for Medicare Advantage plans, or looking to move from their current plan, should check with their primary care physician's office to make sure they are accepting whatever insurance plan they wish to select.

"Not all health plans offer the same benefits and premiums. It is in the best interest of consumers to spend time comparing plans," said Chris Turner, Director of Sales and Network Development for Puget Sound Health Partners. "Within the plans we provide for consumers we offer a plan comparison on our website that allows consumers to review pharmacy programs, compare plan premiums and review benefits pertinent to each plan offered by Puget Sound Health Partners. Our goal is to offer multiple options that are flexible and simplified to meet the individual needs of people with Medicare."

Taking time to research options, spending time investigating and comparing plans in order to make the right choice is critical.

"We are planning hundreds of meetings this fall to help educate consumers of the changes in the enrollment period and to inform them about various plan options they have to choose from," said Turner.

For help in reviewing your current Medicare coverage, you can call 1-800 Medicare, or visit the Medicare website [www.Medicare.gov](http://www.Medicare.gov), or contact the SHIBA Helpline volunteers at 1-800-562-6900. Or visit the Puget Sound Health Partners website at [www.ourpshp.com](http://www.ourpshp.com)

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**About Puget Sound Health Partners**

Puget Sound Health Partners is a private, locally based health plan for Medicare beneficiaries that is founded and supported by area physicians. PSHP collaborates with an extensive network of physicians and other health care providers, such as Everett Clinic, Poly Clinic, Valley Medical Center, Swedish Medical Center and Multi-care to offer high quality, affordable care for Medicare enrollees. PSHP currently offers Medicare Advantage plans to over 7,500 members in King, Pierce, Snohomish, Thurston and Lewis Counties. For more information, visit [www.OurPSHP.com](http://www.OurPSHP.com)