AEP 2022 Overview & Planning Guide

MEDICARE Cafe

SENIOR MARKETING SPECIALISTS

Brought to you by
Senior Marketing Specialists
& the Medicare Café
SMSteam.net
(800) 689-2800

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THANK YOU!

for downloading the 2022 AEP Overview and Planning Guide!

Regardless if this is your first AEP or you have been in the business for 20+ years, AEP can be stressful.

You have 54 days to make sure all your clients are informed and in the correct plan, all while trying to enjoy Halloween and Thanksgiving!

We put together this guide to help you out. We hope you use it and have a great AEP. Of course, if you need more help or need to chat, we are here.

We raise our mugs to you! Thank you for being a part of the Medicare Café!

Sincerely,

Olivia Richardson

Sadie Frazier

Mike Gattorna

Your Medicare Café Team

We will be live Tuesdays through AEP!!!

MEDICARE Cafe

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PANDEMIC PLANNING

Since COVID-19 has steadily continued to stick around, you NEED TO BE PREPARED to take care of your clients and prospects regardless of the situation.

Prepare for the worst, hope for the best is the slogan going into AEP this year.

VIDEO CONFERENCING

There are several video conferencing tools on the market:

- Zoom
- Join.me
- Google Meet
- Skype
- Facetime
- GoToMeeting

Which one is right for you? There is no one-size-fits-all when to comes to video conferencing solutions. Each platform has their pros and cons depending on how you plan on using the program. We suggest looking into some solutions now and performing some practice runs prior to AEP so you are ready and confident in your tech!

CARRIER SOLUTIONS

Most carriers offer some type of e-Application. This will vary depending on the carriers you represent. Getting to know the platforms and what options you have for remote enrollment will help make AEP far more effective.

Need help? Call Senior Marketing Specialists and we can review your carriers and help explain what solutions they have in place for you!

2022 COMPLIANCE REMINDERS

Last App Wins
The AEP enrollment code can be used multiple times. If a client completes an application on 10/15, and then completes a different application with another carrier on 11/1,, the 11/1 app will cancel out the 10/15 app.

Scope of Appointment Forms (SOA)
Most carriers do not require the submission of SOA forms with applications; however, agents are still responsible for keeping documentation of SOA forms for 10 years.

48 Hour Rule
SOA forms can now be signed at the beginning of the appointment, rather than 48 hours in advance.

Educational Events
Educational events do not need to be reported with most carriers. Agents are still responsible for tracking all educational events performed.

Agents may also pass out business cards, contact information, and SOA forms at educational events.

Agents can now conduct an individual marketing/sales appointment after the educational event concludes.

DSNP 4th Quarter Enrollments
DSNP beneficiaries can change plans once per quarter for the first three quarters of each year. However, during the 4th quarter they are required to use the AEP enrollment code, which limits their enrollments from 10/15 – 12/7.

79%

Plan to review their coverage in AEP

78%

Are satisfied with their current coverage

26%

Think they will change plans in AEP

32%

See prescription drug costs as a driving factor to change plans

Apply these numbers to your book of business

3 out of every 4 clients will review their coverage, even though they are satisfied with their current plan

1 out of every 4 are planning on changing

3 out of every 10 are looking to lower their drug costs

From a survey of over 1,300 Medicare beneficiaries

TOP 5

CONSIDERATIONS WHEN CHOOSING A NEW MEDICARE PLAN

1. **Monthly Premium**
2. **Out of Pocket Costs**
3. **Coverage for Preferred Medical Providers**
4. **Prescription drug costs**
5. **Dental / Vision Benefits**

What does all this mean?

Knowing what is important to your clients when it comes to reviewing their Medicare insurance can help you guide your prospects and clients to the most appropriate coverage.

Even if your clients are happy with their current plan, advertisements that express lower costs or other features still may get the interest of your clients!

From a survey of over 1,300 Medicare beneficiaries

The Success of Your AEP Reflects Your Planning & Efforts Throughout the Year

AEP OVERVIEW

WHAT IS AEP?

AEP, or the Annual Enrollment Period, is one of the key times for senior market agents. This year, the time period is from :

October 15th – December 7th

2022 plans are released October 1st to the public; however, enrollment does not take place until October 15th.

This is when Medicare beneficiaries can make changes to their Part C (Medicare Advantage) or Part D (prescription drug) plans. Changes will take effect January 1st. Beneficiaries will be locked in their plan until the next AEP, or until they have a qualifying event that allows them a Special Election Period (SEP).

Some examples of a SEP are:

- Moving to a new service area
- Qualifying for state or federal assistance
- Qualifying for Medicaid
- Plans on leaving the service area

Your clients need to hear from you regardless if they are staying with their current plan or changing. Carriers spend millions of dollars each year marketing in AEP. If your clients are not hearing from you, they will be bombarded with ads from TV, radio, internet, mail, etc. and may choose to call the carrier directly if they have not heard from you!

AEP MARKETING REMINDER

AEP marketing or advertising cannot take place prior to 10/1.

OEP OVERVIEW

WHAT IS OEP?

Open Enrollment Period (OEP)

OEP occurs from: **January 1st through March 31st**
Coverage for the new MA, MAPD, or PDP plan will begin the first of the following month.

The OEP enrollment code can only be used once per enrollment period.

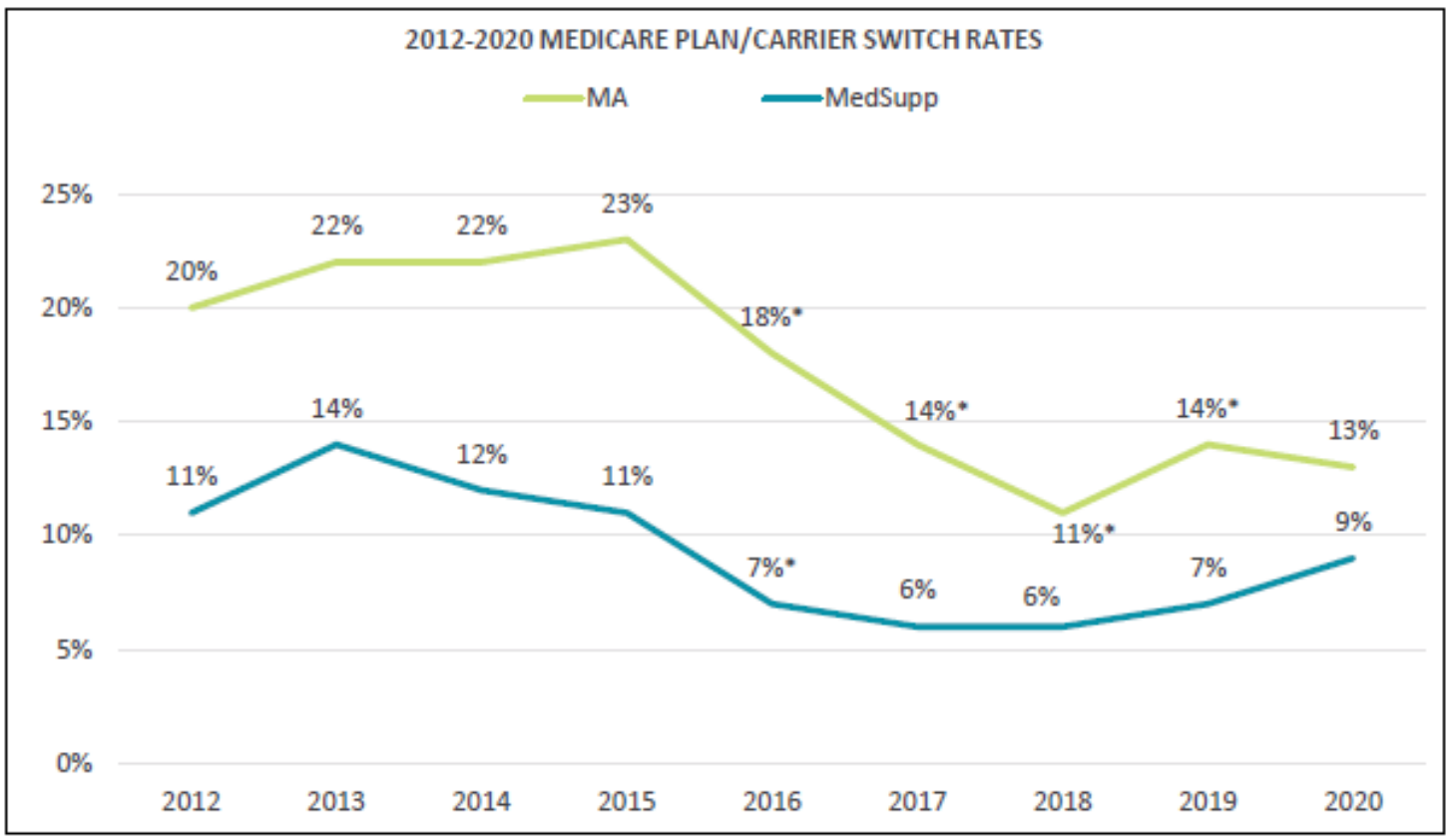
This period is designed to give additional enrollment options to MAPD members. What plan changes can they make? See below:

Current Plan as of January 1st:	**Can Change to:**
MA Only	Another MA Only Plan MAPD Plan PDP (may lose MA coverage) Original Medicare with no PDP
MAPD	Another MAPD MA Only Plan PDP (will lose MAPD coverage) Original Medicare with no PDP
PDP	No changes
Medicare Supplements	Another Medicare Supplement but will be subject to underwriting

Examples:
Bob is leaving his MAPD plan on January 15th to go back to Original Medicare. Bob can enroll into a PDP plan at this time. His MAPD plan will end, and his new PDP plan will start on February 1st.

Mary is leaving her MAPD plan February 20th. She wants to have a Medicare Supplement instead, which she had over 12 months ago (meaning she no longer has a trial right). Mary will have to pass the Medicare Supplement carrier's underwriting to be insured. She enrolls into a PDP plan and Medicare Supplement on February 20th. Her MAPD plan ends March 1st, the same time her PDP plan begins. However, if underwriting for the Medicare Supplement is not complete or she does not pass underwriting, she will only have original Medicare.

HOW MANY BENEFICIARIES ACTUALLY CHANGE PLANS



** Asterisks indicate significant differences from the previous year.*

Based on the research done by Deft Research, in 2020 only 13% of Medicare Advantage members and 9% of Medicare Supplement members changed plans.

Overall, the average change per year is approximately 2.5%.

What this means for you:

100 clients in a stable market
(no major MA or Supp changes)

70/30 Split in Coverage (70% MA / 30% Supp)

10 clients will change MA plans
3 clients will change Medicare Supplements

MEDICARE INSURANCE MARKETING & ENROLLMENT TIME PERIODS

JANUARY

FEBURARY

MARCH

- January 1st – March 31st OEP
- Q1 DSNP Plan Changes

APRIL

MAY

- March 31st – October 15th – Cannot make changes without a SEP
- Q2 DSNP Plan Changes

JUNE

JULY

AUGUST

SEPTEMBER

- June – Late September – Certification for next year's plans & supply orders
- Q3 DSNP Plan Changes

OCTOBER

NOVEMBER

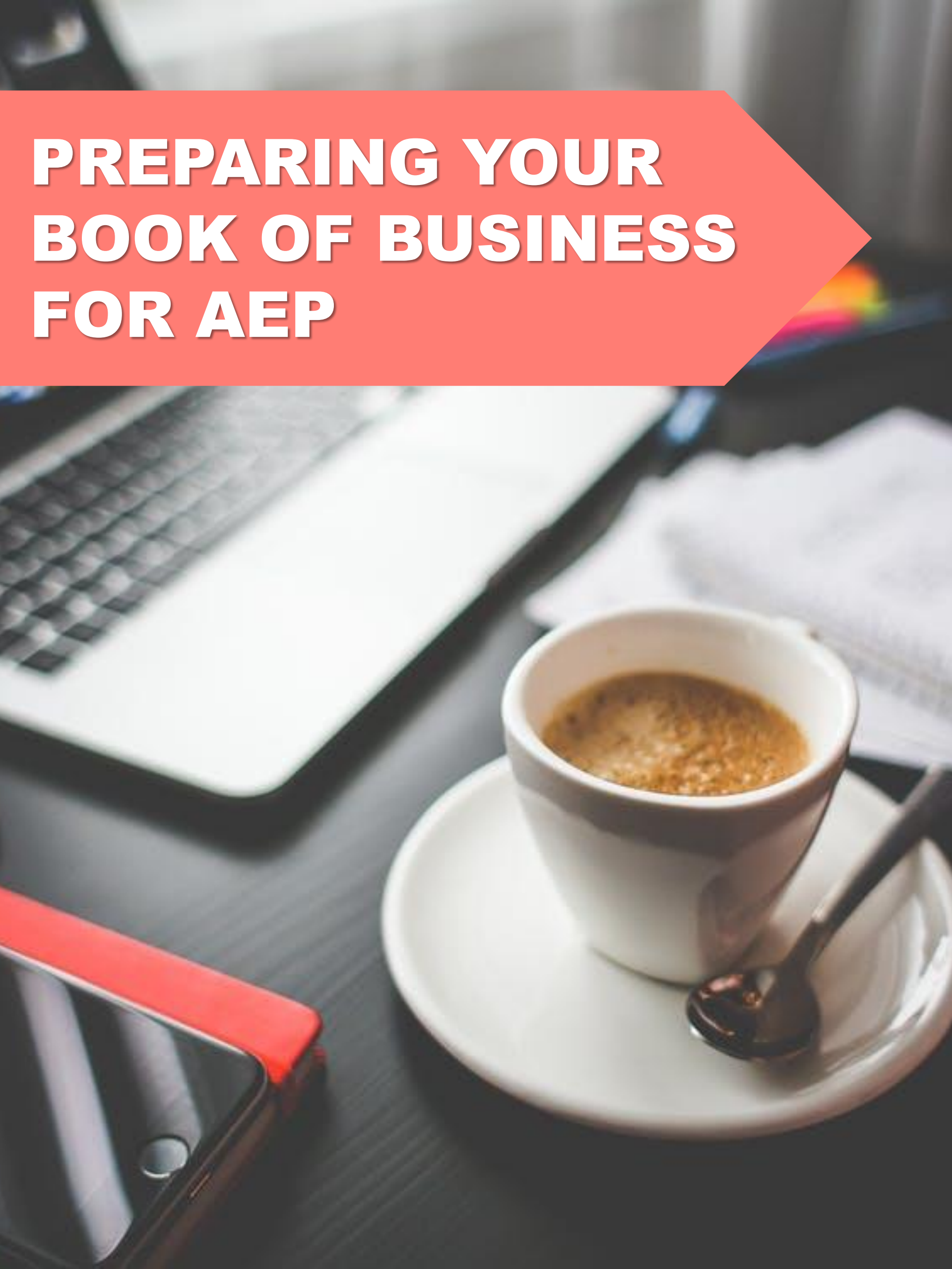
DECEMBER

- October 1st – 15th Next years plans released to public for review
- October 1st AEP marketing begins
- AEP Enrollment October 15th – December 7th

ALL YEAR MARKETING OPPORTUNITIES

- Client Retention
- T65/T67/T69 (etc.) Marketing Campaigns
- Mailers
- Social Media
- Purchasing Leads
- Newsletters
- Referral Marketing
- Professional Partnerships
- Seminars
- Special Needs Plans
- Ancillary Product Marketing
- Medicare Supplement Marketing
- Local Advertising Campaigns
- Community Events
- Other Marketing Opportunities

PREPARING YOUR BOOK OF BUSINESS FOR AEP



PROSPECTS

Appointments you have had with Medicare beneficiaries in the past who have not purchased a policy from you

LIST

Agents should be constantly compiling a list of prospects to call. This can include unsold prospects from previous AEPs and throughout the year. It is key to get their permission (and document it) to contact them during the next AEP to review their options.

The most successful agents go into AEP with 100+ people to contact and set appointments with. Not everyone will still want to have an appointment but going into AEP with a list rather than scrambling to find prospects will give you a great head start.

CALL

A simple Excel spreadsheet will work to keep track of who you need to call. This way, you have all their names in one place. However, using a CRM is a far more effective way to track and organize your clients and prospects.

CLIENTS

Your policy holders, from a simple DVH plan to all their major Medicare plans

TWO CATERGORIES

Stay on Their Current Plan

Your clients may not need to change plans, but they need to hear from you to know this.

Change Plans

You may have clients that have better options. Make sure you are the one to show them!

Regardless of what category your client is in, they need to hear from you. Your clients will be bombarded with mail, television ads, social media posts, billboards, and more telling them to act without you.

You can do this by mailing them letters, calls, emails, or preferably a combination.

NO CHANGE?

You still have an opportunity to assist these clients and prospects!

DVH & HIP

If your clients are not changing plans, that does not mean they are completely covered. They may still be interested in dental benefits, especially if their Medicare Advantage plan has very limited coverage.

They may also be interested to know they have the option to eliminate some or all their hospital co-payments.

Our AEP Toolkit has letters you can personalize and send out to your clients and prospects which express this for you along with other resources and ideas!

AEP TOOLKIT

ALL YEAR MARKETING

Marketing to perform all year to create the momentum for a successful AEP

NEWSLETTERS

What should be happening all year with prospects and clients

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTERS

Newsletters are a simple and effective way to keep your name and agency top of mind with clients and prospects. With more and more seniors having email, the cost of a quarterly newsletter has fallen significantly over the past few years.

There are numerous services out there to help you with little to no experience necessary. MailChimp.com is one that has been highly recommended by agents as it is free (up to 2,000 email addresses) and easy to use.

Needing Content?

Senior Marketing Specialists Agent Marketing Portfolio (AMP) program produces a quarterly newsletter to personalize and send out!

Check out the newsletter and other marketing pieces available here:

AGENT MARKETING PORTFOLIO PROGRAM

SOCIAL MEDIA

THE NUMBERS

72% of all adults use at least 1 social media platform
70% of the above use it daily

45% of all 65+ year-olds use at least one social media platform

Top 5 Platforms Used:

1. YouTube (81%)
2. Facebook (69%)
3. Instagram (40%)
4. Pinterest (31%)
5. LinkedIn (28%)

Don't go wide – Go deep!!!
Rather than try to be on all these, focus on one (we recommend Facebook) and make an impact!

SOCIAL MEDIA

It is no longer “should I” it is “how to”

Your clients and prospects are using Facebook regardless if you are. Make sure they are finding YOU and not your competition!

Being on Facebook is a great way to stay connected with clients, reach out to prospects, and give yourself an online presence.

What to do:

- Create a Facebook Page for your agency
- Post at least 3x’s a week – useful or interesting topics – we can help you with this!
- Invite your friends / clients / prospects to like your page
- Keep active and keep being seen online!

Are you a part of SMS Agent Connect Facebook Group?

Get ideas for posts, stay informed, and connect with other agents and SMS!

CLICK HERE

PRO PARTNERS

Working with other professionals

Working with other professionals can help build referrals and become a resource for your current clients and prospects.

While these relationships take time to build, they are worth pursuing. Here are some professionals you can see to market and refer to:

- P&C agents
- Estate planning attorneys
- Tax professionals
- Insurance agents who specialize in group coverage or under 65
- Doctors' offices
- Pharmacists
- Financial Planners
- Banks / Credit Unions

You can also offer to do generic Medicare or healthcare presentations at local events like Chamber of Commerce meetings, Rotary Club, churches / parishes etc. While your target audience may not be in front of you, these events probably have family or friends to who they can pass any information along to. Stress the importance of the December 7th date to make changes with all the above.

SUPPLEMENTING YOUR AEP WITH LEADS

Creating new prospects with various lead sources

If you are working with a smaller book of business or are looking to supplement your marketing with leads, you have several options.

IMPORTANT

Leads are only as good as the agent working them.

Leads need to be worked with a well thought out plan. Calling a lead once, not making contact, and moving on is NOT an effective method.

During AEP, every carrier, marketing center, call center, and others are working extra hard to grab the attention of seniors and get them to act on their offers.

LEAD VENDORS

Senior Marketing Specialists & the Medicare Cafe have no affiliation with the following lead vendors.

LEAD CONCEPTS

Mailers with a guaranteed rate of return
https://leadconcepts.com/
(800) 283-0187

LEAD HEROES

Telemarketed Leads
Telemarketing Services (use one of their telemarketers as your own)
https://www.leadheroes.com/
(844) 743-7637

ARM LEADS

Mailers with special pricing for Senior Marketing Specialists Agents
https://armleads.com/senior-marketing-specialists/
(800) 662-2722

OTHER VENDORS AND OPTIONS HERE

OTHER TIPS AND IDEAS

Magnetic Business Cards

When is the last time you threw out a magnet off your refrigerator? If you are like me, never. So, make sure you are on their fridge! Most printing places offer magnetic business cards. If you run out, check your local home improvement store. Who knows, you may just get to hold up that giraffe / monkey / elephant creature their grandchild drew!

Q1 Appointments

Make sure you are setting the stage to meet with your clients in Q1. It is much easier to meet with clients whom you already have an appointment with rather than calling later and trying to meet with them. This is a great time to review their plan, including any additional features the plan has, such as gym memberships, dental, etc. You can also offer additional solutions that may not have been addressed.

About a week prior to the appointment, send them a reminder card or email to ensure they remember the appointment or allow them to reschedule if needed.

Get in their Phone

Most of your younger clients (65-70) will have smart phones. When a number comes up that people do not recognize, it is very easy to decline the call and let it go to voicemail. You can avoid your call being declined by making sure you are programmed into their phone. How?

When meeting with your clients, ask if they have their cell phone handy. If they do, tell them you can program your information for them or tell them you will give them your personal cell phone so when they need to contact you, they will have your number. This way, when you contact them, you are no longer a strange number. Or, if they need to pass out your info to a friend or family member, it will be with them.

Marketing Booths

You may have seen marketing booths available through a carrier or local outlets. Whether or not they are worth it depends on your specific situation. Do you have enough in your proverbial sales funnel to keep you active this AEP? If the answer is no, investigate them!

ACTION PLAN

Now that you have an idea of marketing and strategies for AEP, it's time to make your own action plan.

9 STEPS TO AEP SUCCESS

Step 1 – Break down your book of business (both clients and prospects) by product and carrier type. This will help you quickly identify clients who may need to change plans depending on which plans are exiting the area or experiencing major changes in benefits.

Step 2 – Connect with your professional referral network to let them know about AEP and set up some marketing campaigns.

Step 3 – Certify for all products the carrier offers. Remember that you are certifying for the entire following year, not just AEP. Put yourself in a position to say "yes" to opportunities. Certifications usually start June or July (depending on the carrier).

Step 4 – Order supplies as soon as you can to make sure you don't miss out. Yes, carriers do run out of supplies! Also get to know what e-Application options are available.

Step 5 – Organize any marketing campaigns (lead generation, not people in your database or book of business) you want to perform during AEP. Have those tested and approved prior to October 1st so when October 1st hits, you can launch on time. If it is not AEP based, you can launch prior to 10/1.

Step 6 – Use the letters linked in this guide to inform your clients of market changes and whether they should stay on their current policy or explore other options with you. Even if they are staying, you have the opportunity for HIP and/or DVH offerings!

Step 7 – After the letters are mailed, follow up with a phone call. Remember, seniors' mailboxes are filled with advertisements, along with television, radio, internet, and all kinds of other ads. While many may see and read your letter, a phone call will ensure a higher chance of them acting or maintaining coverage with you.

Step 8 – Set your Q1 appointments. Make sure you are setting the stage for a meeting in Q1. This can keep your clients engaged, plus it is easier to meet with clients and prospects you already have an appointment with rather than to call a few months later and try to set one!

Step 9 – Keep your website, blog, and social media outlets up-to-date, especially during AEP!

BONUS: Remember to let clients know you're there to help their family and friends as well! Leave a few extra cards and give them a reason to use you (example: "My clients refer me because they know I will always have their best interests, and yours, in mind").

EVERYTHING YOU NEED FOR AEP & BEYOND

Looking for marketing pieces you can use this AEP?
Carrier Resources? Access to SMS Tools?
They are all in the toolkit!

- Carrier Resources and Tools
- Client Marketing Letters
  - Stay on your current plan generic
  - Stay on your current plan with HIP offer
  - Stay on your current plan with DVH offer
  - Change plans
- Pharmacy Networking Flyer
  - Used to network with pharmacies
- Annual Review Letters
  - Reminder letter
  - General annual review letter
- And more!

CLICK HERE TO ACCESS

SENIOR MARKETING SPECIALISTS RESOURCES

Medicare Center is an enrollment platform to help agents organize, contact, and enroll clients into multiple carriers in one place.

https://www.smsteam.net/medicarecenter/

Senior Marketing Specialists Quote Engine

www.SMSteam.net

Our industry leading quote engine offers:

- Medicare Supplement, Medicare Advantage, Part D, Final Expense, and Dental Quotes
- History of Rate Increases
- Underwriting Guidelines
- Rate Change Report
- Agent Personalization
- And more…

Election Period Assistant

Outside of AEP, your clients will need a Special Election Period (SEP) to enroll or change Medicare Advantage or Part D plans. Not sure what code to use? Check here: https://www.smsteam.net/epa/

Support Services

Need help? Application pending? Missing commission? We are here to help solve the issue with you, not just pass along a number for you to call.

https://smsteam.net/services/support-services-request/

Looking for personalized marketing materials? Check out our Agent Marketing Portfolio (AMP) program!

CLICK HERE

Make sure you are part of the most popular senior market agent group in the industry!

The Medicare Café meets every Tuesday at 10:00 am (CST) to discuss Medicare Agent topics, including:

- Marketing
- Selling
- Industry Updates
- French Press vs. Drip Coffee
- And more…

Can’t make it? You can still register and get the post notes, so you are in the loop and gain access to any resources and materials!

CLICK HERE TO ACCESS THE MEDICARE CAFÉ ON SMS-UNIVERSITY.COM

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