



# STATE OF NEW YORK DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Corning Tower The Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller Empire State Plaza Albany, New York 12237

Dennis P. Whalen  
*Executive Deputy Commissioner*

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| <b>LOCAL COMMISSIONERS MEMORANDUM</b> |
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**OCFS-4616EL (Rev. 11/98)**

**Transmittal No:** 99 OMM LCM-002

**Date:** June 29, 1999

**Division:** Office of Medicaid  
Management

**TO:** Local District Commissioners

**SUBJECT:** Forming Partnerships with Area Agencies on Aging

**ATTACHMENTS:** None

This letter provides you with information about the federal Government Performance Results Act (GPRA) measure to "Improve Access to Care for Elderly and Disabled Medicare Beneficiaries Who Do Not Have Public or Private Supplemental Insurance". The Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA) is addressing this goal through activities aimed at enrollment of eligible beneficiaries in all programs designed to assist low-income elderly and disabled persons with Medicare premiums and cost sharing amounts. The HCFA activities impact all states' Medicaid programs and, in New York, also affect local departments of social services (LDSSs) and area agency on aging (AAA) offices.

A number of activities have been undertaken by HCFA, the State Office for the Aging, the State Department of Health, AARP and other organizations advocating for the elderly. These include direct beneficiary education, as well as activities designed to help understand why potential beneficiaries are not enrolled in the dual eligible programs and the steps needed to assist in their enrollment. As recently as January 1999, HCFA mailed letters to 54,000 New York residents who appeared to be eligible to have their Medicare Part B premiums paid for by Medicaid. That mailing increased the applications in the LDSSs. In anticipation of that activity, at the fall 1998 Medicaid Regional Meetings, attendees were encouraged to work cooperatively and establish partnerships with the AAAs to increase outreach and Medicare Part B Buy-In enrollment for the elderly. Some LDSSs sent Medicaid eligibility workers to AAAs on specific days to process applications in a setting more familiar to the elderly population. In other counties, AAA staff helped screen the applications and assisted the individuals in completing them.

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During the next two years, the Department of Health along with a coalition of other interested parties, will be conducting several outreach activities that could increase applications for Medicaid payment of Medicare Part B premiums. I encourage you to form partnerships with AAAs and other groups that can work with you to increase enrollment of the elderly into the Medicare Part B Buy-In programs. The State Office for the Aging is concurrently issuing a letter similar to this one to the AAAs.

Should you have any questions about this letter or any outreach activities, please call John Brunelle at (518) 474-9193.

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Donna B. Farlow, Deputy Director  
Office of Medicaid Management