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Press Release

On Saturday, October 15, 2011, Medicare's Open Enrollment begins and extends through December 7, 2011.

A recent survey shows that nearly two-thirds of seniors are not aware that the Medicare enrollment period is early this year. Missing these important dates could be costly.

Those beneficiaries who do not enroll or change plans by December 7 will have to wait until next year. "That's just one of several changes that may trip people up," said Ross Blair, CEO of Plan Prescriber, which conducted the survey and helps seniors untangle Medicare's dizzying array of health and drug options.

Anyone needing assistance with the challenges of applying for Medicare or swapping plans should contact a Senior Health Insurance Information Program (**SHIIP**) counselor. **SHIIP** counselors are trained by the Louisiana Department of Insurance to assist potential and existing Medicare clients with applying for Medicare as well as changing from one plan to another. **SHIIP** counselors have no connection with any insurance company or products, but provide unbiased and confidential assistance to Medicare recipients, their family members and friends at no charge.

The **SHIIP** counselor serving this area is Marie Alleman at 225-612-3177 or email marie@newchurchassoc.com.