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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Health and Drug Plan Assistance Ready for Open Enrollment Boom**

*- NOCCOA state award winning consumer advocacy program kicks off seventh season of assistance for older adults-*

(September 6, 2011, Grand Haven) – As a local site for the state health insurance program, MMAP Inc., the North Ottawa County Council on Aging (NOCCOA) is once again offering from October 15 through December 7 an extensive appointment schedule and outreach to individuals 65 and older needing to review and enroll in Medicare Part D Prescription and Medicare Advantage Programs that become annually effective January 1, 2012.

The MMAP program mission is to educate, counsel and empower Michigan's older adults and individuals with disabilities, and those who serve them, so that they can make informed health benefit decisions.

Additionally, NOCCOA trained volunteers and staff can screen older adults for eligibility in the Extra Help program that provides assistance with drug costs as offered through the Social Security Administration.

"If you are already enrolled in a plan, your current provider will be sending you 2012 coverage information. Because plans change, we encourage all people with Medicare to review the 2012 costs and coverage of their current plans, compare with other plans available in our area and choose a plan that meets their needs and budget," advocates Brigit Lewis, NOCCOA Executive Director. "We have scheduled fifteen outreach clinics in ten north Ottawa municipalities to help people by appointment."

There are a limited number of appointments available during the enrollment period, so older adults are encouraged to call NOCCOA at 616-842-9210 or review information at [www.noccoa.org](http://www.noccoa.org). Other options to review plans available for 2012 can be seen at the Medicare website at [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov) or by calling 1-800-633-4227.

The North Ottawa County Council on Aging offers consumer advocacy, healthy lifestyle programming and in home services for individuals 60 years of age and older through the support of community millages, municipal contributions, United Way, grant and private support.

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