Certification Continues

Idaho, Arkansas and Indiana Educators Certified in Smart Choice Health Insurance©

With three more training sessions, 169 educators in 31 states are now prepared to teach.

In March, certified educators Lyle Hanson and Nancy Porter certified 4 educators.

Virginia Brown, HILI team member and certified educator Lisa Washburn conducted a training on-site in Arkansas. To complete the training Lynn Little and Bonnie Braun joined them via distance technology supported by Brad Paleg and certified 13 educators.

On April 23 and May 6, Lynn Little, Bonnie Braun, Mia Russell and Teresa McCoy certified 19 Purdue Extension educators. An additional 55 Purdue Extension FCS educators participated in the workshop on April 23.

Research and Education

USDA Awards AFRI Grant to Study Farmers, Ranchers and the ACA

Bonnie Braun is part of a multi-state research team funded to examine how the ACA:

1) Influences farmers’ decisions to invest, expand and grow their enterprises;
2) Contributes to workforce vitality, development and security in the food and agricultural sector;
3) Impacts farm enterprises given insurance market variability and implementation decisions.

Shoshanah Inwood, University of Vermont, is the PI.

UMD Awards “Moving Maryland Forward” Grant

HILI will use the grant funds to support Spanish translation, interpretation and testing of the new Smart Use program. The project will be part of a partnership with the UMD Department of Residential Facilities and the Department of Communications Graduate Studies in Interpreting and Translation.
Partnerships
The Door-to-Health Care, Program of Healthy Howard, Collected Data from Consumers for Team HILI
In February, the navigators with our partner Door to Health Care collected data from 113 consumers who were asked to complete an 8-item survey as they enrolled in health insurance through Maryland’s official Health Insurance Marketplace (marylandhealthconnections.gov). Findings are being used to create the new Smart Use Health Insurance program.

Webinar Conducted for the Community Health Care Association of New York State.
In March, Virginia Brown and Bonnie Braun conducted a one-hour webinar for 53 community outreach workers. The interactive webinar introduced the participants to Smart Choice Health Insurance Basics® and set the stage for expanded training in fall, 2015.

Scholarship
Smart Choice® Featured at National Health Outreach Pre-Conference.
Representing the HILI team, Maria Pippidis, Virginia Brown, and Bonnie Braun showcased the full line of Smart Choice® programs and products at two roundtables held during the May 6 Health Insurance Literacy pre-conference. The half-day session preceded the new National Health Outreach Conference in Atlanta, GA.

Recognition—Congratulations
Team Member Receives AGNR Alumni Award
Lynn Little received the Excellence in Extension Award from the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources Alumni Chapter at the Annual Alumni Celebration in College Park in April. This award recognizes her career contributions to Extension and the people of Maryland who have benefited from her expertise.

Team Member Honored as Extension Educator of the Year
In April, Virginia Brown received the Maryland Association of Family and Consumer Sciences 2015 Extension Educator of the Year Award. The award carries a year’s membership in the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences.

Team Member is Chair of the ECOP Health Insurance Literacy Action Team
Virginia Brown was appointed as chair of the new ECOP action team charged with leading the Cooperative Extension System in health insurance literacy. In May, she began her 3-year term with a meeting of all action team members prior to the National Health Outreach Conference.

Student Intern Investigates Millennials and Health Insurance for HILI Team
Teri Smith, a Family Science undergraduate, conducted a review of literature on Millennials (18-30). Her results will be used to guide the creation of Smart Choice® and Smart Use® programs targeting this age group. Teri is shown with her poster at the Family Science Internship Poster Event in April.

Farmers and Health Care Reform Article Published in April Edition of Journal of Extension (JOE)
Bonnie Braun is a co-author of a commentary suggesting that Extension can work across program areas and leverage their network of farm and technical workers to increase understanding of the ACA.
New Brochure Released at National Health Outreach Conference

To promote the increasing number and types of Smart Choice© and Smart Use© products and programs, HILI released a new brochure at the National Health Outreach Conference. The brochure will also be distributed at multiple national and state professional conferences in the near future. A version for desktop printing will be made available to certified educators.

Marketing of the Smart Choice and Smart Use Health Insurance© programs, including training to use the materials, is a focus for HILI in 2015.

Our thanks to Trish Moore, Desktop Publishing Technician, UME – Baltimore County office, for her graphic skills and expertise.

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