

## **Vineyard Health Care Access Program Scope of Services**

The Vineyard Health Care Access Program (VHCAP) uses ongoing outreach, enrollment and advocacy services to help low- to moderate-income residents of Martha's Vineyard gain access to health care services through public health insurance, reduced fee medical and dental care and prescription medication.

### ***Outreach and Referrals***

Outreach activities include posting and distributing program information including fliers, brochures and cards in public locations including doctor's offices, pharmacies, senior centers, and libraries; paid and unpaid advertising; and participation in community events such as the Martha's Vineyard Hospital (MVH) Health Fair and the YMCA Healthy Kids Day.

Referrals are made by a wide variety of local and regional health and human services including Island Health Care, Vineyard Medical Services, MVH & Windemere Nursing Home, Island Counseling Center, Councils on Aging, Vineyard House, and Elder Services of Cape & Islands.

### ***Initial Screening and Application***

MV residents call the office, drop in, e-mail or make an appointment at the VHCAP. VHCAP employees meet with clients to initiate the assistance and application process. Clients are interviewed to assess their needs and resources and determine how their needs may best be met. VHCAP employees identify the programs for which clients are eligible, inform the clients about the programs, explaining the application and enrollment process, and help enroll them in every program they are eligible for. This may include enrolling a client or family in multiple programs at one time, including MassHealth, Commonwealth Care, The Children's Medical Security Plan, Health Safety Net, the Prescription Advantage Plan, the Medical Security Plan, Medicare Premium Assistance Programs, free pharmacy programs and Supplement Food and Nutrition program (SNAP/food stamps), Emergency Aid to Families with Dependent Children or for the Elderly and Disabled, and Social Security Disability. Applications are submitted for individuals or with the head of household for families with children under the age of 19.

VHCAP uses web-based enrollment systems and software to conduct enrollment services in the most efficient and timely manner possible. The first, Virtual Gateway, allows VHCAP staff to submit on-line applications for MassHealth, SNAP, reduced fee or free school lunch, and WIC. This application is not available to the public. The second, HelpEngen, is the web-based service that helps connect individuals with appropriate assistance programs, and manage the entire enrollment process, from initial eligibility screening through re-determination and renewal.

VHCAP tracks client data and services provided in its database, Anecdote.

### ***Patient Follow-Up, Enrollment and Advocacy***

VHCAP employees serve as advocates for every individual who seeks assistance through its office. If a client is facing a health emergency and qualifies for MassHealth, the organization will fax the individual's application marked as "urgent," and will follow-up on the application to ensure the individual receives coverage as soon as possible. In addition, if a client does not qualify for public assistance programs but is uninsured, employees will help the individual

understand the best method by which to seek care through reduced fee programs. Many individuals need case management and follow-up to ensure they appropriately utilize their assistance program and seek the health care services they need.

VHCAP maintains professional linkages with multiple local, regional, state and federal programs and agencies (providers) in order to provide the most effective client services.

One of VHCAP's employees is a certified SHINE (Serving the Health Insurance Needs of Elders) counselor. One of VHCAP's employees is bilingual/bicultural Portuguese-speaking; another also speaks Portuguese and Spanish.

VHCAP employees maintain their qualifications by participating in the MassHealth Training Forum; SHINE trainings; and related professional education programs.

### ***Voluntary Medical, Dental and Prescription Programs***

VHCAP has been a partner in the creation of several local and regional voluntary reduced fee medical, dental and prescription medication programs: 1) Specialty Network for the Uninsured (Cape and Islands region); 2) Cape Cod Dentists Care (Cape and Islands region); and 3) the Prescription Medication Assistance Program (VHCAP-Martha's Vineyard). Clients can apply for the programs through the VHCAP office for referrals or direct assistance.

Access to affordable dental coverage is provided via insurance coverage and referral to local and regional dental providers and programs. VHCAP also operates Vineyard Smiles, which provides affordable dental care via portable dentistry and hygiene to children from preschool age and K-12 and via mobile clinics at the local senior centers.

### ***Senior Assistance Program***

VHCAP employees explain Medicare for MV residents who are turning 65 and help sign them up for Medicare, explain how Medicare works, chose a Medicare Prescription Drug Plan (Part D), and provide information about private health plans that supplement Medicare. VHCAP also assists lower income seniors who qualify for additional coverage to apply, which helps them to pay for some medical expenses. These programs include MassHealth (acts as secondary coverage with Medicare); MassHealth Buy-in (pays for the Medicare Part B premium, which is currently \$100/month) Health Safety Net (acts as secondary coverage with Medicare for any hospital bill in Massachusetts). In addition, routine, preventive dental care is free at hospitals and Community Health Centers, such as at Martha's Vineyard Hospital Dental Center.

MassHealth for Long Term Care: Elders who need care at home or in a nursing home can explore their options and see if they qualify for MassHealth to pay for these services.

Extra Help for Medicare Prescription Drug Plan: Seniors may be able to get their prescription plan for free and/or with reduced premiums, copays and deductibles.

Prescription Advantage: a state program that supplements the Medicare prescription drug plan by offering coverage during the coverage gap ("donut hole"), coverage for some drugs not covered by Medicare and an additional enrollment period outside of Part D open enrollment.