

# C4A Action Alert

Connecticut Association of Area Agencies on Aging, Inc.

## **CHOICES Needs Your Help!**

**Please reject the Governor's proposal to remove \$1 m. in SFY'09 funding for the CHOICES program that was appropriated in 2007.**

**WHAT IS CHOICES?** Connecticut's Health Insurance Assistance, Outreach, Information and Referral, Counseling and Eligibility Screening Program (CHOICES) is a collaborative effort among the Connecticut Area Agencies on Aging, the Department of Social Services Aging, Community and Social Work Division, the Center for Medicare Advocacy, and numerous community partners, including senior centers. CHOICES provides health insurance counseling, information & assistance and benefits screening to older adults, those with disabilities, and caregivers. This service helps people to understand and plan for their long-term care needs.

**CHOICES does much more than just counsel people on Medicare!**

## **WHY SHOULD LEGISLATORS SUPPORT CHOICES?**

**PEOPLE NEED INFORMATION TO MAKE GOOD LONG-TERM CARE CHOICES.** Both the Connecticut Long-Term Care Needs Assessment and the Connecticut Long-Term Care Plan confirm that people need more information to plan for their long-term care needs. CHOICES is the model on which DSS is building Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRC's) to serve both older adults and those with disabilities.

**CHOICES IS AN UNBIASED SOURCE.** The CHOICES program provides older consumers and their caregivers with unbiased, current and comprehensive information.

**CHOICES HELPS THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE EVERY YEAR!** In 2007 alone, CHOICES:

- helped over 33,000 individuals and caregivers to navigate the Medicare Part D benefit;
- assisted over 10,000 individuals with questions on financial assistance, benefits, housing, adult day care and services for people with disabilities
- sponsored 330 outreach presentations
- provided meaningful volunteer opportunities to 373 trained counselors
- provided expert training to social services professionals to help them keep current
- used radio, cable television, billboards, local newspapers and expert materials from the Center for Medicare Advocacy and other sources to educate the public