



For Immediate Release
September 29, 2014

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OHA Awarded New \$442,863 Consumer Assistance Program (CAP) Grant from HHS

Hartford, CT – State Healthcare Advocate Victoria Veltri announced today that the Office of the Healthcare Advocate (OHA) was awarded a \$442,863 federal consumer assistance program (CAP) grant under the Affordable Care Act (ACA) to help Connecticut healthcare consumers with complaints and appeals, education and enrollment. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, (HHS) announced the award on September 26th.

This is the fourth time the Office of Healthcare Advocate (OHA) has won this competitive grant, its largest so far. Previous awards included a 2010 award for \$408,255, a 2012 limited competition award for \$127,967 and another 2012 award for \$408,155.

“We are particularly gratified that HHS again recognized OHA’s record of success and expertise in providing consumer education, enrollment and appeals assistance and our use of the data we collect to propose changes to improve our healthcare system,” said Victoria Veltri, State Healthcare Advocate.

The OHA helps individual Connecticut consumers enrolled in all types of health coverage, including private and public plans. It also helps to educate consumers about their rights, how to advocate on their own behalf and directly assists consumers with appeals of denials of a benefit, service, or determinations of advanced premium tax credits through plans offered on Access Health CT.

OHA saved consumers a record \$9.6 million in calendar year 2013 and fielded 12,000 calls through its toll free line. It opened 5,683 cases.

“OHA’s 2014 calendar year case volume is on a trend to nearly double from 2013. The need for a trusted partner with education and assistance with navigating the complexities of healthcare coverage cannot be underestimated. The CAP grant award will allow OHA to handle the increased case volume in the same kind of real-time, expert assistance OHA already provides,” said Veltri.

Veltri praised the support of Lt. Governor Nancy Wyman, the legislature and the Connecticut congressional delegation for their collective support of the program, which will ensure a full range of independent consumer assistance.

“I applaud OHA for their advocacy on behalf of consumers—this grant is excellent news for the state,” said Lt. Governor Nancy Wyman, Chair of the Access Health CT Board. “The team at Access Health CT shattered enrollment expectations—280,000 Connecticut residents now have affordable insurance, and we’ve cut the state’s uninsured rate in half. This grant will help us continue this critical work to build a strong healthcare system and a competitive Connecticut.”

Consumers who need assistance can call 1-866-466-4446, or e-mail OHA at healthcare.advocate@ct.gov. Requests for speaking engagements or outreach and educational events can be sent to OHA.outreach@ct.gov.



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