

Sandy Wood, Manager  
DMAP Research, Education and Development

**Number:** DMAP-IM-11-059

**Authorized Signature**

**Issue Date:** 07/01/2011

**Topic:** Medical Benefits

**Subject:** **Provider Announcement:** Focus Groups in Douglas, Multnomah, Clackamas, Washington, Wasco and Hood River counties

**Applies to:**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> All DHS employees             | <input type="checkbox"/> County Mental Health Directors                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Area Agencies on Aging        | <input type="checkbox"/> Seniors and People with Disabilities                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Children, Adults and Families | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): Selected DMAP and OHA staff |
| <input type="checkbox"/> County DD Program Managers    |   |

**Message:**

The Oregon Health Authority is helping the federal Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS) conduct focus groups in Oregon. We are fortunate to have funding from the federal Medicare-Medicaid Coordination Office to support the groups.

The objectives of the focus groups are to:

- Learn about how Medicare-Medicaid enrollees are experiencing care currently, including health care services, mental health services, addiction services, and long term care services and supports;
- Learn about how Medicare-Medicaid enrollees with complex care needs navigate the system, whether or not they perceive fragmentation/lack of coordination, and what their priorities are for improvement; and
- Learn about differences in how the health care system is experienced in different parts of the State, and by people receiving different mixes of services through different delivery systems.

The Division of Medical Assistance Programs (DMAP) mailed invitations on July 1, 2011, to randomly selected dual-eligible clients living near Roseburg, Portland and The Dalles. Participants may ask for assistance with transportation.

**Douglas County**

Thursday, July 21

10:30 am to noon, *or*

1:30 pm to 3:00 pm

**Multnomah, Clackamas and Washington counties**

Tuesday, July 19

10:30 am to noon, *or*1:30 pm to 3:00 pm, *or*

Wednesday, July 20

10:30 to noon

**Wasco and Hood River counties**

Monday, July 18

1:30 pm to 3:00 pm

We hope you are supportive of this activity and encourage invitees to attend. It is extremely important that we all have information about what works well for our medical assistance clients.

- Attached is an information sheet on the focus groups and a model invitation and FAQ.
- All information is confidential.
- Please answer any questions you might get from invitees.

*If you have any questions about this information, contact:*

<b>Contact(s):</b>	Lee Zacharias with The Zacharias Group (conducting the focus groups)
<b>Phone:</b>	1-207-767-3704
<b>E-mail:</b>	<a href="mailto:Lee@ZachariasGroup.com">Lee@ZachariasGroup.com</a>



## Memorandum

**To: Oregon Health Plan Stakeholders**

**From: Judy Mohr Peterson, Director  
Division of Medical Assistance Programs  
Oregon Health Authority**

**Date: July 1, 2011**

**Subject: CMS-sponsored Focus Groups with Oregon Medicare-Medicaid Enrollees**

I am writing to inform you of a series of focus groups to be conducted in Oregon during the week of July 18 with beneficiaries who have both Medicare and Medicaid coverage (Medicare-Medicaid enrollees). We are fortunate to have support from the federal Medicare-Medicaid Coordination Office to conduct the groups.

The focus groups are part of Oregon's current efforts to improve health care delivery in the State. They also will contribute to a national effort sponsored by the Medicare-Medicaid Coordination Office at the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. *Thomson Reuters* and its partner *The Zacharias Group*, under contract to the Medicare-Medicaid Coordination Office, will conduct the focus groups. The Oregon Department of Human Services and the Oregon Health Authority are helping plan the groups because knowing about client experience will help us improve our programs.

The objectives of the groups are to:

- Learn about how Medicare-Medicaid enrollees are experiencing care currently, including health care services, mental health services, addiction services, and long term care services and supports;
- Learn about how Medicare-Medicaid enrollees with complex care needs navigate the system, whether or not they perceive fragmentation/lack of coordination, and what their priorities are for improvement; and

- Learn about differences in how the health care system is experienced in different parts of the State, and by people receiving different mixes of services through different delivery systems.

OHA will send invitations to a sample of Medicare-Medicaid clients. Those who wish to volunteer for a focus group will use a toll-free number. No one from Thomson Reuters or The Zacharias Group will have access to member information until the client calls to volunteer. The attached sample invitation letter explains the process in greater detail.

In the coming weeks, you may receive inquiries from persons who have received invitations. We hope that you will feel comfortable reinforcing these messages:

- This is a legitimate research project that may result in improvements to the Medicare and Medicaid programs;
- Participant privacy is protected. Participant names will not be provided to health plans or providers, or anyone else outside the research project. Results will be compiled anonymously, with no names included;
- This is entirely voluntary, but slots are limited, so those who are interested should not delay in calling the toll-free number.

We appreciate your support of this project. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call Ms. Lee Zacharias, with The Zacharias Group at 207-767-3704.



HEALTH CARE PROGRAMS  
Division of Medical Assistance Programs

John A. Kitzhaber, MD, Governor

Oregon  
**Health**  
Authority

500 Summer St NE E35  
Salem, OR, 97301  
Voice: 503-945-5772 or 1-800-527-5772  
FAX: 503-373-7689  
TTY: 711  
[www.oregon.gov/OHA/healthplan](http://www.oregon.gov/OHA/healthplan)

July 1, 2011

Dear Oregonian,

To improve our health care programs, I am asking for your help. Are you willing to share how Medicare and Medicaid (Oregon Health Plan) are working for you?

If yes, please accept my invitation to share your experience and come to a **focus group** to improve health care. The groups are part of a national research project.

You can sign up by calling toll-free **1-800-589-3583**. When you call, the researcher, Ms. Lee Zacharias, will ask for this code number: **P-1197**. The dates and times (pick one) available in **Portland** are:

**Tuesday, July 19**  
10:30 am to noon  
1:30 pm to 3:00 pm

**Wednesday, July 20**  
10:30 am to noon

Light refreshments will be served. Help with transportation is available, if needed. Please tell Lee when you call that you will need help.

Lee will ask you a few questions to make sure each group represents a variety of experiences. To thank you for your time, she has a **\$50 gift card** to give to each participant at the end of the meeting.

If you can help, please call today. The information you share is completely confidential. Your experience helps improve health care programs in Oregon and across the nation.

Sincerely,

Judy Mohr Peterson, Director  
Division of Medical Assistance Programs  
Oregon Health Authority

## Frequently Asked Questions

### What is a focus group?

A focus group is a guided meeting with a group of six to eight people. *Lee Zacharias*, the research leader, will ask questions and make sure everyone has a chance to speak. There are no right or wrong answers.

### Why was I invited?

About 2,000 OHP clients enrolled in both Medicare and Medicaid received this invitation from the Oregon Health Plan. Focus groups will be taking place in three Oregon cities. Participation is voluntary.

### Is my privacy protected?

**Absolutely.** We have not shared your name with anyone, and the research company will not know your name unless you call to volunteer.

If you choose to volunteer for the focus group, the research firm will not share your personal information with health plans, providers or anyone else outside the project.

### Who are the focus group organizers?

We are fortunate to have funding from the federal Medicare-Medicaid Coordination Office to support the groups. *Thomson Reuters*, the world's information services leader, and *The Zacharias Group*, public opinion experts, will lead the project. OHP is not using any program funds for the focus groups.

### I called to sign up but was told they did not need me. Why?

The size of a focus group is limited and may have been full or may have already signed up someone with a similar experience as you. To be successful, the focus groups must enroll people from the widest range of experience.

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**To join a focus group, please call Ms. Lee Zacharias  
before Friday, July 8, toll-free at 1-800-589-3583.**