

It was truly inspiring to hear about the sense of justice, commitment and heart brought to SMP work by the 10 volunteers who were just honored today. Multiply their contributions by the other 4,000+ active SMP volunteers across the nation and the positive impact is difficult to fathom (let alone measure, right?)

One important contribution we can make to our SMP volunteers is to arm them with the knowledge they need to feel competent and confident.

The Training Kit you have in your hands contains a step by step process for providing your volunteers with a foundation of knowledge in three main content areas:

- 1) The national SMP program
- 2) Medicare basics
- 3) Medicare Fraud and Abuse

As Barbara explained earlier, this is the result of many decisions and changes of direction from the original path to volunteer certification that we started upon and that we discussed at the 2008 regional conferences. We instead created a solid foundation, upon which we will continue to build into the future.

First, I want to acknowledge the volunteer stakeholder committee, who provided the raw material for the volunteer training manual (one part of the Training Kits before you). Though we recognized this committee at the 2008 Regional Conferences, they continued to provide feedback on draft versions of the manual for several months after the conferences. Here are the states who participated on that committee:

**CO, IA, MD, MO, NC, NE, ND, OH, WI.** Additionally, I want to thank the **CA, Guam,** and **WA** SMPs for sharing their existing curriculums with us during the volunteer manual development process.

The Center contracted with consulting firm Health Benefits ABCs (HBABCs for short) – Bill Benson, Nancy Aldrich, Leta Blank and Jolie Crowder -- for development of the Volunteer Training Manual content. You may remember Jolie Crowder formerly of AHQF: she convened the SMP volunteer stakeholder committee in 2008 and wrote the first drafts based upon her research and committee input. The final version published before you represents many hours of meetings between all of the members of HBABCs staff, the SMP Resource Center staff and Barbara Dieker at AoA, with additional guidance from Linda Graff. Additionally, the Center and HBABCs, under the guidance of Barbara Dieker and in consultation with Linda Graff, collaboratively developed both the implementation guide for SMP project directors and the assessment for training participants.

The classroom training, based upon the SMP Foundations volunteer manual, with its accompanying PowerPoint slides, handouts, activities and Trainer's Guide was developed by the Education and Human Development Division of the American Institutes for Research (who I will refer to as "AIR" from here on out). I think you will enjoy the engaging and interactive sampling of the curriculum that is to follow. Graciously, AIR changed directions along with us, not always an easy task when you examine the level of detail contained within the materials and the many layers affected by changes – from PowerPoints to handouts to activities to speaker's notes. Thank you Mary Ann, Dahlia and Larry, for "going with the flow."

Finally, before I turn things over to Heather Flory, Center Training Manager, I want to particularly acknowledge her role in the publishing of this kit. Though all Center staff were involved in its development and production at various levels, it was Heather who kept track of our multitudinous edits, sharing the changes with AIR that would affect the classroom curriculum, writing additional content when needed, and completing the final editing and formatting. Heather's attention to detail and visual appeal (notice all of the pictures), insistence upon clarity and her experience as a trainer are certainly reflected in the kit as a whole. She will talk with you about implementing the training in your state before turning this session over to Mary Ann Corley and Dahlia Schaewitz.