

Installment #1 – Introduction

For those of us who work with seniors or who intend to work with seniors, it's important to get the word out about the veterans benefits available to those who served our country or to their surviving spouses. Not only can we help them understand their benefits, but by getting the word out, we can help a large number of them with our services and expand our individual businesses.

Such VA benefits for the elderly include compensation, DIC, veterans health care, pension, death pension and state veterans homes. Pension and death pension (aid and attendance) are particularly helpful for those elderly households who need long-term care. About 1/3 of all seniors could get this benefit under the right conditions. That's how many war veterans or their surviving spouses there are in this country.

Many of us are using awareness of the pension benefit as a marketing tool to bring in new clients. A large number of the people I work with are using various strategies or our formal marketing package to get the word out about pension and in turn to create more business for themselves. I talk to these practitioners and providers all over the country every day. As a result, I have been able to get feedback on the various strategies that are working for promoting awareness of the pension benefit to the community.

I would like to share with you what works and what doesn't to help you in your efforts. Below, are 24 ideas on marketing and promotion that I will share with you weekly.

If you have questions or need help individually please give me a call at 800-989-8137 or send me an e-mail at Tom@careUtah.com.

Tom Day

Director, National Care Planning Council

How to Use the Veterans Aid and Attendance

Benefit as a Tool for Expanding Your Business

1. Understanding how to spread your marketing and promotional net as wide as possible in order to yield the greatest number of inquiries
2. Understanding the strategy of targeting only disabled war veterans, their surviving spouses and their caregivers
3. Avoiding generating leads from healthy veteran households who likely produce few business opportunities

4. Learning how to turn marketing-generated inquiries into clients
5. targeting your message to the right audience to create clients
6. Understanding the advantage of using a team marketing approach -- Example: an attorney teaming up with a financial practitioner and a non-medical home care company (or alternatively, any two combinations thereof)
7. Understanding which referral sources will produce the most potential clients -- Example: financial practitioners concentrate on assisted living but in many cases are totally ignoring board and care homes that don't advertise and no one knows they are there. Or another example: concentrating on the opportunities of working with nursing homes tied to planning strategies that help generate new clients.
8. Having a variety of business strategies to meet potential client needs -
- Examples: personal provider strategies, Medicaid dovetailing strategies, working with nursing homes, working with assisted living, working with home care companies, long-term care planning, temporary funding strategies while awaiting approval, end-of-life planning, wills, trusts and powers of attorney, Medicaid spend down versus triggering a penalty, personal care contracts, sale of long-term care insurance, life insurance sales, planning opportunities with caregiver children
9. Understanding the nuances of who qualifies and under what conditions, so that you can better advise your clients and make sure you don't miss any opportunities to help all eligible veteran families get benefits
10. Guiding successfully-awarded clients into the VA health care system for additional benefits
11. Finding the most effective strategy to process claims in a compliant manner
12. Finding the most efficient way to get claims approved 100% of the time
13. Finding a strategy for getting claims approved in a timely manner
14. Creating a liaison with claims processors from veterans service organizations
15. Using Internet search engine optimization strategies for promoting your website and creating leads
16. Using the Internet to create leads
17. Using email strategies to create appointments for targeted community presentations
18. Using email article strategies to promote awareness and create leads
19. Using community seniors' publications; article placement strategies to promote awareness and create leads
20. Using brochure and booklet placement strategies to promote awareness and create leads
21. Promoting successful seminars by avoiding the use of expensive direct mail or media ads and using multiple presentation -- different dates and locations -- brochures to create ongoing opportunities for producing leads

22. Understanding where to target your presentations and promotions --
Examples: caregivers at work, specifically-targeted community seminars, community-coordinated assisted living presentations, hospital discharge workers, centers of influence in the senior care community and so on
23. Understanding where not to target your presentations and promotions --
Examples: veterans organizations, service clubs and organizations, veterans publications, community at large seminars, general media ads for veterans benefits, general mailers for veterans benefits, other groups not pre-qualified by you or your promotions and so on
24. Creating a marketing advantage for you against your competitors who are not complying with the law concerning claims processing, who are not being ethical, who are negligent in their practices or who are misrepresenting themselves
25. Distinguishing your expertise, honesty and reliability from competitors who are creating animosity in the care provider community or with local or national veterans service organizations