

## **Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Let the AAA Team Help You Navigate Your Health!**

**Coldwater, MI.** A new year presents new opportunities and new challenges. Whether you are looking for assistance on where to find community resources related to food or housing; navigating online health insurance options that are difficult to access; or just want medical information to better understand a newly diagnosed health condition, the Branch-St. Joseph Area Agency on Aging (AAA) can help!

According to Laura Sutter, Coordinator for the Area Agency on Aging, “Everyday we are asked to make both simple and complex decisions. These decisions range from ‘Do I need to make a doctor’s appointment?’ to ‘How do I find reliable information about my new medical condition and will my insurance cover treatments?’ Our trained staff can help get the information needed so that you can make the best decision possible.” The Agency employs a nurse, a licensed social worker and outreach specialists who are knowledgeable about health insurance, resources to help maintain independence and other community supports. These well trained, highly qualified team of professionals can provide assistance to those 60 years and older who need assistance regarding the type of health care benefits they have, as well as the type of benefits they need. AAA staff can help explore benefits, coverage, plans and help set a personal health care course for quality health.

Rebecca Burns, Health Officer for the Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency, the Agency that oversees the AAA office, adds “We are very proud of our AAA team. They do an excellent job in providing navigation services. Recently, they received the State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) “Navigation Award” from the Michigan Medicare/Medicaid Assistance Program.” The team was recognized for reaching the highest proportion of Medicare beneficiaries within the age 65 years and older bracket.

In addition to providing navigation services to older residents, the health department also provides insurance assistance, Medicaid and bundled benefit enrollment, and makes referrals to key community programs and supports through its INS and Out (Insurance Navigation Services

and Outreach) program. Call the county health department office to schedule a one-on-one appointment with a certified in-person assister (trained staff member). We can provide the assistance you need to stay healthy and well.

To learn more about the AAA programs, please visit our website [www.bhsj.org/AAA](http://www.bhsj.org/AAA). To learn more about our INS and Out program, go to our website at [www.bhsj.org](http://www.bhsj.org) and click on the 'Agency Brochures' on the 'Publications' web page.

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Area Agency on Aging Staff (from left to right): Belinda Whitely, Deanna Himebaugh, Laura Sutter, Melissa Cramton and Megan Bentley – this year's recipients of the SHIP Navigator Award.

