

For Immediate Release



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## **Senior Center in Margate Hosts Town Hall on Medicare Modernization Act**

**Visit from Mike Leavitt, U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services and Mark McClellan, M.D., the Administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Initiates Meeting for Seniors and Community Leaders**

Margate, FL, June 16, 2005 – Secretary Mike Leavitt of the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services and Dr. Mark McClellan will be making their first visit to South Florida on Monday, June 20<sup>th</sup> to meet with local officials and seniors to discuss the Medicare Modernization Act in time for the January 2006 program roll out.

A Margate Town Hall meeting with Secretary Leavitt and Dr. McClellan is scheduled for Monday June 20, 2005 at the Northwest Focal Point Senior Center at 6009 N.W. 10<sup>th</sup> Street in Margate. Invitations have been sent to a variety of local leaders who have a genuine interest in senior issues. Northwest Focal Point seniors, as well as volunteer representatives from Serving Health Insurance Needs of Elders (SHINE), will also be invited. From 12:30-1 p.m. Mr. Leavitt and Dr. McClellan plan to meet with key community leaders and will continue their talk with seniors from 1-1:30 p.m.

Costas Miskis, Health and Human Services Regional Director (Region IV) of Atlanta, Ga., is working with Project Director Yolanda Rodriguez to host the event. Rodriguez is in charge of the Northwest Focal Point Senior Center.

When asked about the timing of the meeting, Mr. Miskis said, “Our responsibility is to empower seniors with information on their options.” The town hall meeting is scheduled to raise awareness for the upcoming November 15<sup>th</sup> program enrollment date and the January 1<sup>st</sup> 2006 roll out of the Medicare Modernization Act program.

On December 8, 2003, President George W. Bush signed into law the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement and Modernization Act of 2003. According to Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) the Medicare Modernization Act “provides seniors and individuals with disabilities with a prescription drug benefit, more choices, and better benefits under Medicare” ([www.cms.hhs.gov/](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/)).

The U.S. government appointed the Department of Health and Human Services as the primary agency for protecting the health of all Americans. Its focus is on those who are least able to help themselves ([www.hhs.gov](http://www.hhs.gov)). Among the 300 programs that the DHHS supports are those that deal with Medicare and Medicaid, health information technology, and services for older Americans.

North West Focal Point in Margate is one of the three senior centers to be chosen out of 83 senior centers in the tri-county area as a host site. The Center serves 10 cities in northwest Broward County. Those interested in attending the town hall meeting should RSVP by calling (954) 973-0300. Center programs are administered by the City of Margate, and supported under an agreement with the

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Florida Department of Elder Affairs and the Area Agency on Aging of Broward County, Inc., through the Older Americans Act of 1965, as amended, and State Community Care for the Elderly.

For more information on the Medicare Modernization Act log on to [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov), the Social Security Administration <http://www.ssa.gov> or call 1-800-Medicare.

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