



*My Health.  
My Medicare.*

## **Fact Sheet – Understanding Medicare**

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### **2010 Open Enrollment**

Medicare is health insurance for people ages 65 or older, people under age 65 with certain disabilities, and people of any age with End-Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) or permanent kidney failure requiring dialysis or a kidney transplant.

### **Medicare Coverage Choices**

Medicare beneficiaries can choose their prescription drug and health coverage. Below are brief descriptions of the coverage choices available for the vast majority of qualifying beneficiaries.

#### ***Original Medicare***

- Part A and Part B coverage is provided by the Federal government.
  - Part A coverage is hospital insurance that helps cover inpatient care in hospitals, care in a skilled nursing facility, hospice, and home health care.
  - Part B coverage is medical insurance that helps cover doctors' services and outpatient care. Part B also covers some preventive services to help maintain health and keep certain illnesses from getting worse.
- Beneficiaries can enroll in a Medicare Part D plan offered by a private company (see below for information) to add prescription drug coverage.
- Beneficiaries can buy a Medigap (Medicare Supplement Insurance) policy, which is sold by private insurance companies, to help fill the gaps in Part A and Part B coverage.

#### ***Medicare Advantage Plans***

- Run by private companies approved by and under contract with Medicare.
- Similar to an HMO or PPO plan.
- Provides Part A and Part B coverage but can charge different amounts for certain services. May offer extra coverage and prescription drug coverage. Costs for items and services vary by plan.



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- In most cases, prescription drug coverage is through the Medicare Advantage plan, rather than a separate Part D plan.
- Enrollees in Medicare Advantage plans do not need a Medigap policy.

### ***Other Medicare Health Plans***

- Plans that are not Medicare Advantage Plans but are still part of Medicare. Some of these plans are run by private companies and some by government entities.
- Include Medicare Cost Plans, Demonstration/Pilot Programs, and Programs of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE).
- Some plans provide Part A and Part B coverage, and some also provide prescription drug coverage (Part D).

### ***Medicare Part D (Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage)***

- A prescription drug option offered by private companies approved by and under contract with Medicare.
- Helps cover the cost of prescription drugs.
- May help lower your prescription drug costs and help protect against higher costs in the future.

### **Other Private Coverage**

- Some seniors might also have health and/or prescription drug coverage from a former or current employer or union.
- These plans have varying rules and policies related to Medicare coverage.

**More information about Medicare prescription drug and health plans is available at [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov) or by calling 1-800-633-4227 (1-800-MEDICARE)/(TTY 1-877-486-2048).**