Medicare Overview

Medicare Program Overview

The Health Insurance for the Aged and Disabled Act (title XVIII of the Social Security Act), known as "Medicare," has made available to nearly every American 65 years of age and older a broad program of health insurance designed to assist the nation's elderly to meet hospital, medical, and other health costs. Health insurance coverage has also been extended to persons under age 65 qualifying as disabled and those having end stage renal disease (ESRD). The program includes three related health insurance programs—hospital insurance (HI) (Part A), supplementary medical insurance (SMI) (Part B) and prescription drug coverage (PDP) (Part D).

Medicare Part C, which is also known as Medicare+Choice, is a Medicare program that gives beneficiaries more choices among health plans. Everyone who has Medicare Parts A and B is eligible, except those who have end stage renal disease, and were not in a Medicare+Choice plan at the onset of this condition.

Learn about the Medicare program, access general program information, and eligibility criteria for various Medicare benefits via the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) Internet Only Manuals.

Medicare General Information, Eligibility, and Entitlement Manual (CMS Pub. 100-01)

- Chapter 1—General Information
  - §10.1—Hospital Insurance (Part A) for Inpatient Hospital, Hospice, Home Health and Skilled Nursing Facility (SNF) Services - A Brief Description
  - §10.3—Supplementary Medical Insurance (Part B) - A Brief Description
  - §40—Role of Part A Intermediaries
  - §50—Role of Part B Carriers
- Chapter 2—Hospital Insurance and Supplementary Medical Insurance
  - §10—Hospital Insurance Entitlement
  - §40—Supplementary Medical Insurance (SMI)
  - §50—Identifying the Patient’s Health Insurance Record Using the Health Insurance Card
- Chapter 3—Deductibles, Coinsurance Amounts, and Payment Limitations

Medicare Benefit Policy Manual (CMS Pub. 100-02)

- Chapter 1—Inpatient Hospital Services
- Chapter 2—Inpatient Psychiatric Hospital Services
- Chapter 6—Hospital Services Covered under Part B
- Chapter 8---Skilled Nursing Facility (SNF) and Swing Bed (SB) Benefits
- Chapter 10--Ambulance Services
Medicare Overview

- Chapter 11--ESRD
- Chapter 12--Comprehensive Outpatient Rehabilitation Facilities (CORF) Services
- Chapter 13---Rural Health Clinic (RHC) and Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) Services

Medicare National Coverage Determinations (NCD) Manual (CMS Pub. 100-03)

Medicare Claims Processing Manual (CMS Pub. 100-04)
  - Chapter 1—General Billing Requirements
  - Chapter 3—Inpatient Hospital Billing
  - Chapter 6—Inpatient Part A Billing and SNF Consolidated Billing
  - Chapter 9—Rural Health Clinics/Federally Qualified Health Centers
  - Chapter 15-Ambulance

Medicare Secondary Payer Manual (CMS Pub. 100-05)

Medicare Financial Management Manual (CMS Pub. 100-06)

Medicare Program Integrity Manual (CMS Pub. 100-08)

Medicare Contractor Beneficiary and Provider Communications Manual (CMS Pub. 100-09)

CMS Specialty Web Pages

Ambulance Services Center

Critical Access Hospitals (CAH) Center

End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) Center

Federally Health Qualified Centers (FQHC) Center

Hospital Center

Rural Health Clinics (RHC) Center

Skilled Nursing Facility (SNF) Center