



Medicare Open Enrollment

Medicare Open Enrollment is October 15 - December 7

Medicare offers a wide range of health choices, from Original Medicare (Parts A and Parts B), Medicare Advantage plans, and the Medicare prescription drug benefit. Your patients' health needs change from year to year and their Medicare benefits and costs may change each year too. That's why it's important for your patients to review their Medicare options each fall and choose the option that best fits their health needs through assistance such as [Medicare.gov plan finder](#).

Encourage your patients to compare their current plan to other options so that they can see if they can lower their costs or find a better plan suited to their needs. Medicare Open Enrollment is the best time for people with Medicare to see what choices Medicare has to offer and make changes in their coverage. Whether your patients have Original Medicare or a Medicare Advantage plan, both offer several important benefits and protections, including:

- Certain preventive benefits – including cancer screenings – are available at no cost to patients when furnished by participating health professionals. The annual wellness visit allows people to sit down with their doctors and discuss their health care needs and the best ways to stay healthy.
- Medicare will notify people about plan performance and use its online Plan Finder to encourage enrollment in quality plans.

It's worth it to take the time to review and compare Medicare coverage options, but your patients don't have to do it alone. Medicare is available to help. Your patients can:

- Visit the Medicare.gov plan finder (<http://www.medicare.gov/find-a-plan>) to compare current coverage with all of the options that are available in their area, and choose a new plan if they decide to make a change.
- Call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227) 24-hours a day/7 days a week to find out more about their coverage options. TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.
- Review the *Medicare & You 2018* handbook. It's mailed to people with Medicare in September and is also available online at [Medicare.gov \(https://www.medicare.gov/medicare-and-you/medicare-and-you.html\)](https://www.medicare.gov/medicare-and-you/medicare-and-you.html).
- Get one-on-one help from their State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP). They can visit [Medicare.gov/contacts](https://www.medicare.gov/contacts) or call 1-800-MEDICARE to get the phone number.

If your patients have limited income and resources, they may be able to get Extra Help paying for their prescription drug coverage costs. For more information, they can visit [socialsecurity.gov/i1020](https://www.socialsecurity.gov/i1020) or call Social Security at 1-800-772-1213. TTY users should call 1-800-325-0778.

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