

Note from CMS Administrator Dr. Mehmet Oz

Medicare and Medicaid at 60: Strengthening Health Care for the Future

This year marks 60 years since the creation of Medicare and Medicaid, two programs that have shaped the modern foundation of American health care. Today, they provide coverage for more than 160 million people and continue to be vital lifelines for older adults, people with disabilities, and low-income families.

Their impact goes beyond access. Medicare played a key role in the desegregation of American hospitals. Within months of the law being signed, 90 percent of hospitals accepted Black patients, changing our health care landscape forever. And Medicaid helped launch coordinated care models that continue to improve patient outcomes today. As technology has evolved, these programs have evolved as well, supporting everything from telehealth to remote monitoring to better reach the people they serve.

In recent months, CMS has cracked down on the largest healthcare fraud schemes in U.S. history, launched reforms to overhaul prior authorization, and invested in modern tools like real-time data to better protect patients and preserve trust in these programs.

At CMS, we are honoring this legacy by taking decisive action to reform, strengthen, and safeguard these programs for the next generation. We are driving innovation, improving outcomes, and protecting the integrity of Medicare and Medicaid so they remain strong for decades to come.

We invite our partners to mark this milestone not just with celebration, but with action—to work with us to drive innovation, eliminate waste, and ensure these programs continue to work better for everyone.

Dr. Mehmet Oz

Administrator

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

Read more on the history of Medicare and Medicaid, including a timeline of program milestones at <https://www.cms.gov/about-cms/who-we-are/history>.