**MED D - General Information about Medicare Plans**

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**Description:** This document provides general information about Medicare.

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| What is Medicare? |

Medicare is a federal health insurance program for:

* People who are 65 and older
* Certain younger people with disabilities
* People with End-Stage Renal Disease (Permanent kidney failure requiring dialysis or a transplant, sometimes called ESRD)

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| Medicare Options |

When first enrolling in Medicare, there are 2 options for Medicare coverage:

* **Original Medicare:** 
  + Includes:
    - **Medicare Part A (Hospital Insurance)**
      * Helps cover inpatient care in a hospital or limited time at a skilled nursing facility (following a hospital stay)
      * Covers some home health and hospice care
    - **Medicare Part B (Medical Insurance)**
      * Helps cover services from doctors and other health care providers, outpatient care, home health care, durable medical equipment, and some preventative services
  + Beneficiaries can also enroll in supplemental plans:
    - **Medicare Part D plan (Drug Coverage)**
      * Helps cover the cost of prescription drugs (including many recommended shots and vaccines)
    - **Medicare Supplemental Insurance (Medigap**)
      * Helps cover the beneficiary’s share of costs in original Medicare, which is 20%
* **Medicare Advantage**
  + Previously known as **Medicare Part C** (Managed Health Care Plan)
  + Include Part A (Hospital), Part B (Medical)
  + May include Part D (Drug) coverage and additional benefits (**Examples:** Vision, hearing and dental) can be bundled together in one plan

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| Part D (Prescription Drug Coverage) |

Medicare drug coverage is optional and is offered to everyone with Medicare. If beneficiaries decide not to get it when first eligible, and they don’t have other creditable prescription drug coverage (like drug coverage from an employer or union) or get Extra Help, they will likely pay a late enrollment penalty if you join a plan later. Generally, they will pay this penalty for as long as you have Medicare drug coverage.

To get Medicare drug coverage, the beneficiary must join a Medicare-approved plan that offers drug coverage. Each plan can vary in cost and specific drugs covered.

There are two ways to get Medicare Part D (Drug) coverage:

1. **Medicare drug plans**
   * These plans add drug coverage to Original Medicare, some Medicare Cost Plans, some Private Fee for Service plans, and Medical Savings Account plans. Must have or be eligible for Medicare Part A (Hospital Insurance) and/or Medicare Part B (Medical Insurance) to join a separate Medicare drug Plan D.
   * These plans are often referred to as a **Prescription Drug Plan (PDP)**.
2. **Medicare Advantage Plans or other Medicare health plans with drug coverage**
   * These plan provide Part A, Part B, and Medicare drug coverage (Part D) through these plans.
   * The beneficiary must have Part A and Part B to join a Medicare Advantage Plan, and not all of these plans offer drug coverage.
   * Plans with prescription drug coverage are often referred to as a **Medicare Advantage Prescription Drug Plan (MAPD)**.
   * Some beneficiaries may enroll into a **Medicare Medicaid Plan (MMP)**, which provides coordinated Medicare and Medicaid benefits for dually eligible individuals.

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| Additional References |

[MED D - ICL, Coverage Gap, TrOOP, Catastrophic Coverage](TSRC-PROD-022972)

[MED D - 4 Stages of Medicare Part D Coverage](TSRC-PROD-021776)

[MED D - SilverScript Late Enrollment Penalty (LEP) (CCR Only)](TSRC-PROD-045357)

[MED D - Blue MedicareRx (NEJE) Late Enrollment Penalty (LEP)](CMS-PCP1-024700)

[MED D - Low Income Subsidy (LIS) Informational Overview](CMS-PCP1-018616)

[MED D - Income Related Monthly Adjustment Amount (D-IRMAA)](CMS-PCP1-041559)

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