

# Medicare and the Health Insurance Marketplaces

## Introduction

Medicare is the federal government health insurance program for people age 65 and older and people with disabilities. The Affordable Care Act changed Medicare positively in many ways. For instance, it is closing the Part D doughnut hole, making it possible for older Americans to receive many preventive care services free of charge and helping reduce Medicare expenditures by implementing cost saving measures such as decreased overpayments to private plans. The Affordable Care Act also introduced a star rating system to make choosing and changing insurance plans easier than ever. Finally, the Affordable Care Act is helping to reduce unnecessary hospital readmissions for people with Medicare.

Another positive effect of the Affordable Care Act is the introduction of the Health Insurance Marketplaces (also known as Exchanges). In the Marketplaces, uninsured or underinsured Americans can purchase insurance in the form of Qualified Health Plans (QHPs). The Marketplaces will also enable small business owners to help their employees enroll in affordable health insurance. As QHPs become part of the health insurance market, there is a great need for information about how people with Medicare are affected by these plans.

It is extremely important for people to understand that the Marketplaces are not for people with Medicare. Furthermore, most people who purchase health insurance through the Marketplaces will need to enroll into Medicare as soon as they are eligible to do so. This toolkit is intended to help people identify the correct health insurance for them, making the right choices based on their Medicare eligibility.

The toolkit contains a variety of materials that explain who should transition to Medicare and when, but these materials do not address every possible situation. For example, the information does not apply to people who are eligible for Medicare because of End-Stage Renal Disease (ESRD). The rules for people who have to pay for Medicare Part A (rather than receiving premium-free Part A, as most people with Medicare do) may be different as well.

## Toolkit Materials

(Click on the links below to view each resource)

- **[Medicare Basics: Coverage, Eligibility and Enrollment](#)**

People who are transitioning from Qualified Health Plans (QHPs) and other types of insurance to Medicare need to be aware of how to enroll in Medicare when they become eligible. This training introduces Medicare Part A, Part B and Part D costs and coverage. It explores the ways people can be eligible for Medicare, and the times they should enroll into Medicare Parts A and B. The training also provides information on Part D eligibility and enrollment.
- **[Medicare and the Marketplaces: Talking to Consumers](#)**

This training will help most caregivers and professionals explain the Marketplaces to a Medicare beneficiary. It provides details on the Affordable Care Act and specifics about the Health Insurance Marketplaces, offering a specific explanation for why a person with Medicare should generally avoid the Marketplaces. It also discusses the steps a person should take to transition from a QHP into Medicare.
- **[Medicare and the Marketplaces: A Professional Training](#)**

In addition to the content contained in the Talking to Consumers, professionals who work with the Medicare population may require background knowledge and details about how Medicare coordinates with other types of insurance, and the consequences of late enrollment. This presentation provides more specific information that professionals need to help their clients and patients with Medicare make smart enrollment decisions.
- **Frequently Asked Questions**
  - [General Questions about the Marketplaces](#)
  - [What people with Medicare Need to know about the Marketplaces](#)
  - [Transitioning from Marketplaces to Medicare](#)
  - [The Small Business Health Options Program \(SHOP\) and Medicare](#)
- **Handouts**
  - [Medicare Transitions Flier](#)
  - [How the Marketplaces will Operate in Each State](#)
  - [Health Reform and Medicare](#)

[Medicare and the Marketplaces: SHOP Plans Fact Sheet](#)  
[Medicare and the Marketplaces: Moving to Medicare from Marketplace Plans](#)  
[Medicare and the Marketplaces: What People with Medicare Need to Know](#)

## **How to Use This Guide as a Teaching Resource**

This toolkit can be used to provide trainings to consumers, employer benefits staff and other professionals. Employers and professionals when counseling consumers may also use the scenarios and handouts.

In addition to using these materials, anyone making a decision about when to enroll in Medicare Part B should contact the Social Security Administration at 800-772-1213. It is important to keep notes about the date, time and representative with whom you spoke as well as what was discussed. This will be helpful if there are questions about benefits eligibility in the future.

## **Additional Resources**

[Transitioning from Health Insurance Marketplaces to Medicare](#)  
Medicare Interactive: A product of the Medicare Rights Center

[Medicare & the Health Insurance Marketplace](#)  
The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

[Medicare & the Marketplace](#)  
Medicare.gov

[Report Fraud and Abuse](#)  
Medicare.gov

## **Web Resources**

[MedicareInteractive.org](#)

[MedicareRights.org](#)

[Marketplace.cms.gov](#)

[Healthcare.gov](#)