

Medicare Information for Caregivers Now Available on NIHSeniorHealth

If you're caring for an older friend or family member, you've probably had questions about Medicare, the federal health insurance program for adults 65 and older and people under age 65 with disabilities. While you may know that Medicare helps pay for medical and prescription drug costs, you may want to become more familiar with the Medicare benefits and resources available to your friend or loved one. An easy-to-read overview, "Medicare Basics for Caregivers," is now available at NIHSeniorHealth.gov, the Web site for older adults from the National Institutes of Health. This brief, yet comprehensive introduction to Medicare gives caregivers the basics and helps them find answers to their questions.

The topic was developed with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services based on its booklet, *Medicare Basics: A Guide for Families and Friends of People with Medicare*. "Knowing how Medicare works can help a person make better financial decisions about care," says Dr. Marie Bernard, deputy director of the National Institute on Aging. "A caregiver who is knowledgeable about Medicare can be an informed advocate for an older loved one who needs to access the benefits the program provides. The new 'Medicare Basics for Caregivers' topic on NIHSeniorHealth is an excellent source of concise, easy-to-understand information that will benefit both caregivers and their loved ones."

Caregivers and others needing a general introduction to Medicare can visit

<http://nihseniorhealth.gov/medicare/toc.html> to find out about medical and hospital benefits, enrollment, billing, prescription drug costs, home health care and much more.

Older Americans are increasingly turning to the Internet for health information. In fact, over 70 percent of online seniors look for health and medical information when they go on the Web. NIHSeniorHealth (www.nihseniorhealth.gov), which is based on the latest research on cognition and aging, is a joint effort of the National Institute on Aging (NIA) and the National Library of Medicine (NLM). The site features short, easy-to-read segments of information that can be accessed in a number of formats, including various large-print type sizes, open-captioned videos and an audio version. Additional topics coming soon to the site include dry eye, periodontal disease and long-term care.

CMS administers the Medicare program. For more information, visit the Web site at www.medicare.gov

The NLM is the world's largest library of the health sciences and collects, organizes and makes available biomedical science information to scientists, health professionals and the public. For more information, visit the Web site at www.nlm.nih.gov.

The NIA leads the federal effort supporting and conducting research on aging and the medical, social and behavioral issues of older people. For more information on research and aging, go to www.nia.nih.gov.

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) -- *The Nation's Medical Research Agency* -- includes 27 Institutes and Centers and is a component of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. It is the primary federal agency for conducting and supporting basic, clinical and translational medical research, and it investigates the causes, treatments and cures for both common and rare diseases. For more information about NIH and its programs, visit www.nih.gov.

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