

**To: Better Medicare Alliance**  
**From: The Winston Group, The Mellman Group**  
**Re: Recent Survey on Medicare Advantage**  
**Date: March 9, 2015**

The following document outlines thoughts on a recent survey of 600 seniors in the Medicare Advantage program (February 24-28, 2015).

1.) Seniors in the Medicare Advantage Program are very satisfied with their plan, with 69% being “very satisfied”.

**How satisfied are you with your Medicare Advantage plan?**

Very satisfied	69
Somewhat satisfied	22
Somewhat not satisfied	3
Not satisfied at all	2

2.) Choice is also very important to seniors in Medicare Advantage, with three in four (74%) who believe it is “very important” for seniors to have the choice of a plan other than traditional Medicare, such as the Medicare Advantage plan.

**How important is it for seniors to have the choice of a plan other than traditional Medicare, such as a Medicare Advantage plan?**

Very important	74
Somewhat important	18
Somewhat not important	1
Not important at all	1

3.) We asked seniors in Medicare Advantage to rate a series of aspects of their plan. Of that list, quality of care (8.00) and choice of doctors and providers (7.94) were viewed the most positively.

**On a scale of 1-9 with 1 being poor, 5 neutral and 9 excellent, how would you rate each of the following aspects of your Medicare Advantage plan:**

Quality of care	8.00
Choice of doctors and providers	7.94
Value of the program	7.57
Prescription drug coverage	7.51
Access to innovative approaches to health care	7.27
Out of pocket costs	7.11

4.) We asked seniors about specific benefits and satisfaction with each benefit if it were included as part of their plans. Of that list, choice of doctors and hospitals (89-4 satisfied-not satisfied), preventive care (87-3), and management of chronic conditions (86-2) were the benefits that were most commonly cited and had the highest level of satisfaction.

**I am going to read a series of benefits to the Medicare Advantage plan. For each, please tell me if your plan includes that benefit, and if you are satisfied or not satisfied with that benefit.**

	Included/Satisfied- Not Satisfied	Not Included
Choice of doctors and hospitals	89-4	4
Preventive care such as screenings and immunizations	87-3	4
Help managing chronic conditions such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol and diabetes	86-2	4
Coverage for prescription drugs	80-10	6
Services to ensure that your health care is coordinated among your doctors and providers	79-3	6
Fitness and exercise benefits	68-3	16
Out of pocket costs	67-14	12
Primary medical care provided by a licensed doctor or nurse in the home	58-3	17
Vision benefits	49-12	30
Hearing benefits	34-6	34
Dental benefits	26-16	53

5.) We took a look at a few statements related to the outcomes generated by the Medicare Advantage program; seniors in MA found those to be credible statements, particularly the statements about coordinated care leading to better quality of care (77% believe) and Medicare Advantage members having lower out of pocket costs (69% believe).

- *Coordinated care programs in Medicare Advantage promote information sharing across doctors and health care providers, which leads to better quality of care, especially for chronic disease (77-14 believe-do not believe).*
- *Medicare Advantage members have lower out of pocket costs and greater savings, compared with what they would have paid in the traditional Medicare program (69-17 believe-do not believe).*
- *Seniors in Medicare Advantage have better health outcomes than those in traditional Medicare (64-20 believe-do not believe).*
- *Research has shown that patients in Medicare Advantage have fewer hospital readmissions than traditional Medicare patients (57-21 believe-do not believe).*

6.) About one-third (34%) of survey respondents said that they had switched from traditional Medicare into Medicare Advantage. Among that group, a majority (58%) felt that Medicare Advantage was better than traditional Medicare, with 31% saying “about the same”, and only 2% felt that it was worse. This indicates that those who have been in both traditional Medicare and Medicare Advantage tend to view Medicare Advantage as being better.

7.) Finally, while the Medicare Advantage plan is facing cuts, a majority of seniors in Medicare Advantage (60%) agree that *a cut to Medicare Advantage is a cut to Medicare* (60-22 agree-disagree). Additionally, there are criticisms that government pays private health insurance companies to manage Medicare benefits through the Medicare Advantage program, but 69% of seniors in Medicare Advantage believe that the results of that program are worth it (69-17 worth it-not worth it).