

BETTER MEDICARE

ALLIANCE

January 27, 2023

Chiquita Brooks-LaSure
Administrator
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW, Room 445-G
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Administrator Brooks-LaSure:

Thank you for your leadership and tireless work in protecting the wellbeing of all Americans. We appreciate the stability you have provided in the Medicare program for seniors, including to those who have chosen Medicare Advantage.

We write to express our strong support for the Medicare Advantage program and the high-quality care it provides to over 29 million older adults and people with disabilities. As a diverse group of providers, health systems, consumers and patient advocates, community-based nonprofits, and other health care leaders, we urge the Administration to ensure Medicare Advantage can continue to provide the affordable, high-quality, patient-centered coverage Americans rely on every day.

Enrollment in Medicare Advantage has doubled over the last decade. An estimated 46% of Medicare beneficiaries choose Medicare Advantage today and it is projected to become the leading form of Medicare within the next year, driven by significant gains in enrollment among minority, low-income and dual-eligible populations.[\[1\]](#)

Medicare Advantage provides older adults and those with disabilities affordable, high-quality services, including care coordination, disease management programs, out-of-pocket spending limits, access to community-based programs, additional supplemental benefits, and often prescription drug coverage for no additional premium. Older adults on Medicare Advantage report a 94% satisfaction rate[\[2\]](#) with their coverage and quality of care, driven by the supplemental benefits, innovative clinical care models, and greater financial protections that Medicare Advantage provides.

Medicare Advantage is providing high-quality care with three-quarters of enrollees in a plan with a quality rating of 4 or more stars.[\[3\]](#) Importantly, Medicare Advantage helps provide a holistic approach to care through access to telehealth services, wellness and physical fitness benefits, in-home care, and benefits that address health-related social needs such as food insecurity, social connections, and transportation needs. This model results in improved health outcomes with 43% fewer avoidable hospitalizations for any condition, lower hospital readmission rates, and higher rates of utilization of preventive services.[\[4\]](#)

Medicare Advantage also supports an increasingly diverse population with varied health and socioeconomic needs. Fifty-two percent of Medicare Advantage enrollees live on incomes of less than 200% of the Federal Poverty Level.^[5] Additionally, over 23% of Medicare Advantage enrollment is comprised of beneficiaries dually eligible for Medicare and Medicaid.^[6] Thankfully, average monthly Medicare Advantage premiums in 2023 will reach historical lows, even as the availability of supplemental benefits continues to increase.^[7] Recent Medicare Current Beneficiary Survey (MCBS) data show that Medicare Advantage beneficiaries save nearly \$2,000 per year on total health expenditures compared to those in fee-for-service Medicare.^[8] These cost savings are important to all seniors living on fixed incomes, including those in communities of color. Which is, in part, why 53% of Latino Medicare beneficiaries and 49% of Black Medicare beneficiaries, respectively, choose enrollment in Medicare Advantage.^[9]

Importantly, Medicare Advantage also delivers significant value for taxpayers and the health care system. An October 2021 analysis by Milliman found that per-member, per-month spending in Medicare Advantage is nearly \$7 lower than fee-for-service Medicare.^[10] The report further explains, “these findings suggest that overall Medicare Advantage offers significant value to the federal government.”

Medicare Advantage depends on continued support from policymakers and regulators to deliver these successes for our nation’s seniors and people with disabilities. We ask the Administration to protect this coverage lifeline and safeguard important benefits in Medicare Advantage such as those focused on addressing health equity, in-home clinical assessments, and patient centered care.

We thank you again for your work protecting seniors’ access to affordable, high quality coverage options. We look forward to partnering with you to deliver a healthier future for tens of millions of older adults and those with disabilities through a strong, stable, and vibrant Medicare Advantage.

Sincerely,

Better Medicare Alliance
Academy of Managed Care Pharmacy
agilon health
America’s Physician Groups
American Medical Group Association
American Telemedicine Association
Answer Health (MI)
Arizona Nurses Association
Austin Regional Clinic (TX)
Buffalo Medical Group (NY)
Capital Medical Clinic (TX)
Central Ohio Primary Care Physicians
ChenMed

Coalition of Texans with Disabilities
Collom and Carney Clinic Association (TX)
Community Health Care (OH)
Crystal Lake Health Center (MI)
Diagnostic Clinic of Longview (TX)
El Paso Health
Entira Family Clinic (MN)
FamilyCare Medical Group (NY)
Health Care Transformation Task Force
Healthcare Leadership Council
HealthCAWS-Combining Accountability with Support
Home Care Association of America
Included Health
Iora Health
Jackson Clinic (TN)
Las Vegas Heals
Liberty Doctors (SC)
MaineHealth
MANNA
MDX Hawai'i
Meals on Wheels America
Meals on Wheels South Florida
Nathan Adelson Hospice (AZ)
National Adult Day Services Association
National Alliance on Mental Illness of Southern Nevada
National Association of Health Underwriters
National Athletic Trainers Association
National Black Nurses Association
National Hispanic Medical Association
Nevada Adult Day Healthcare Centers
Nevada Latin Chamber of Commerce
Nevada Nurses Association
Nevada Retail Association
New Hampshire Association of Nurse Anesthesiology
New Jersey State Nurses Association
Oak Street Health
Palmetto Primary Care Physicians (SC)
Pennsylvania Association of Area Agencies on Aging
Physician Group of Southeastern Ohio
Piedmont Health Care (NC)
Pinehurst Medical Clinic (NC)
Pioneer Physicians Network (OH)
Podometrics

Population Health Alliance
Preferred Primary Care Physicians (PA)
Premier Family Physicians (TX)
PriMed Physicians (OH)
Prominence Health Plan
Public Sector Healthcare Roundtable
Richfield Medical Group (MN)
Senior Helpers of Tempe (AZ)
Signify Health
SilverSneakers by Tivity Health
SNP Alliance
South Austin Medical Clinic (TX)
Starling Physicians (CT)
The Toledo Clinic (OH)
United Physicians (MI)
UPMC Health Plan
Upstream
Vancouver Clinic
VillageMD
Wilmington Health (NC)
Wisconsin Occupational Therapy Association
Wood County Hospital (OH)
YMCA of Southern Nevada
YMCA of the USA

- [1] <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/2022-medicare-trustees-report.pdf>; <https://www.healthaffairs.org/doi/10.1377/forefront.20220323.773602>
- [2] <https://bettermedicarealliance.org/news/poll-shows-overwhelming-support-for-protecting-medicare-advantage-funding/>
- [3] https://www.cms.gov/newsroom/fact-sheets/2023-medicare-advantage-and-part-d-star-ratings#_ftn1
- [4] <https://bettermedicarealliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/BMA-High-Need-Report.pdf>; https://bettermedicarealliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/BMA_Avalere_MA_vs_FFS_Medicare_Report_0.pdf
- [5] <https://bettermedicarealliance.org/news/study-medicare-advantage-saves-seniors-nearly-2000-a-year-compared-to-ffs-medicare/>
- [6] Analysis of CMS Master Beneficiary Summary File. March 2022.
- [7] <https://www.cms.gov/newsroom/press-releases/biden-harris-administration-announces-lower-premiums-medicare-advantage-and-prescription-drug-plans>
- [8] <https://bettermedicarealliance.org/news/study-medicare-advantage-saves-seniors-nearly-2000-a-year-compared-to-ffs-medicare/>
- [9] https://bettermedicarealliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/BMA_2021-Q2-Data-Brief_6.15.21.pdf
- [10] <https://www.milliman.com/en/insight/Value-to-the-federal-government-of-medicare-advantage>