



Medicare 101 Review and What's New for 2025

John Cocowitch (5 yrs) – Presenter
John Sullivan (8 yrs) – Q&A Support
Paul Bolig (6 yrs) – Q&A Support
Chatham County SHIP Counselors

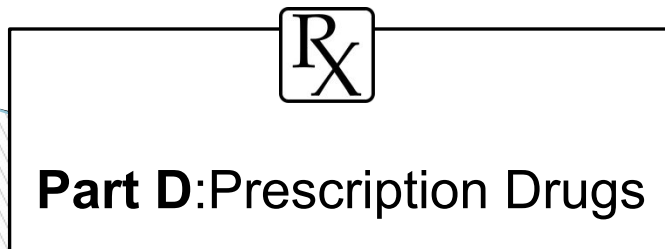
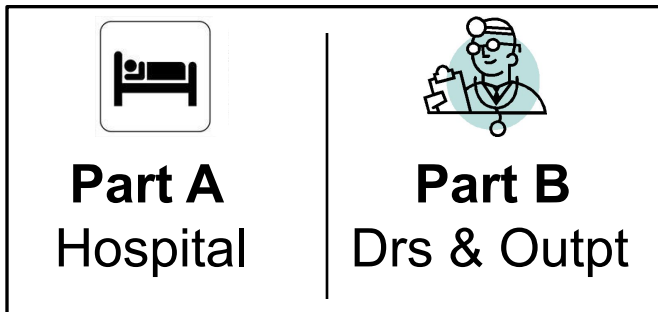
Keys to Choosing the Best Medicare Option

- What Services are Covered?
 - Additional benefits
 - Plan limits & restrictions
- What Providers Can You See?
- What is Your Total Cost?
 - Monthly premiums
 - Out of Pocket Costs (paid to provider)
- What Lets You Sleep at Night?



What Medicare Do You Have?

Original Medicare

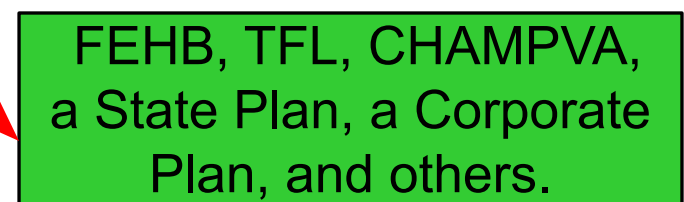


OR

Medicare Advantage Plan




OR



What Medicare Do You Have?

Original Medicare ?

Part A & B

 **MEDICARE HEALTH INSURANCE**


Name/Nombre
JOHN L SMITH

Medicare Number/Número de Medicare
1EG4-TE5-MK72

Entitled to/Con derecho a	Coverage starts/Cobertura empieza
HOSPITAL (PART A)	03-01-2016
MEDICAL (PART B)	03-01-2016



Medicare Supplement (Medi-Gap)

 **BlueCross BlueShield of North Carolina**

Member Name	Group No	098005
	Date Printed	01-07-2013

	PLAN F Covers	
	Part A	Deductible
	Part A	Coinsurance
	Part B	Deductible
	Part B	Coinsurance

BlueMedicare Supplement

Part D-Drug Plan

 **Cigna-HealthSpring RxSM (PDP)**

Health Plan (80840) 9151014609
Customer ID: <MemberID>
Name: <first name> <middle> <last name>
RxBIN: <RxBIN>
RxPCN: <RxPCN>
RxGroup: <RxGroup>

MedicareRx
Prescription Drug Coverage X
55617_<FBP>

What Medicare Do You Have?

Medicare Advantage ?

AARP MedicareComplete
insured through **UnitedHealthcare**

Health Plan (80840): **911-87726-04**

Member ID: **812766732-00** Group Number: **71870**

Member:

PCP Name:
MALONEY, M.D., NANCY J.
PCP Phone: (336) 584-3100

Copay: Office/ Spec/ ER
\$0/ \$35/ \$65

H5516 PBP# 001

Payer ID:
87726

MedicareRx
Prescription Drug Coverage X

RxBin: 610097
RxPCN: 9999
RxGrp: COS

AARP MedicareComplete Choice (PPO)
Medicare limiting charges apply

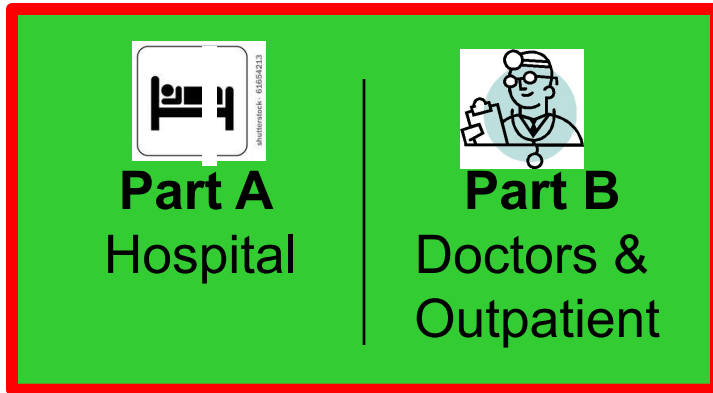
UNITED HEALTHCARE
PASSPORT

Handwritten annotations: Three orange ovals highlight the Copay amounts, the MedicareRx box, and the PPO plan name.

- ✓ Look for PPO or HMO
- ✓ Medicare RX= Includes drug coverage
- ✓ Usually shows Copay amounts
- ✓ NC State Retirees have this logo

Medicare Choices

Original Medicare



January 1, 2024

Part A Deductible: \$1632/Stay

Part B Premium: \$174.70/Month

Part B Deductible: \$240/Year

(New Costs about 15 Nov 24)

▣ The Good:

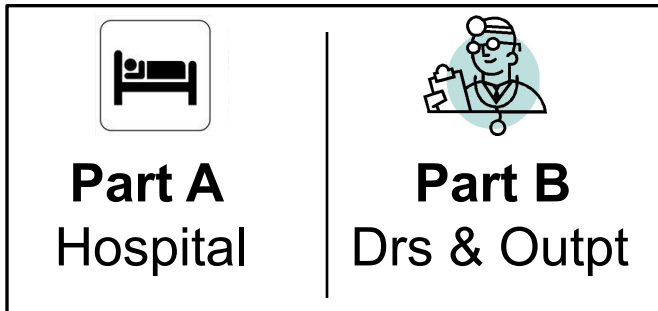
- Use it anywhere in the U.S. secondary to Medicare.
- Few, if any, prior authorizations.

▣ The Bad:

- No maximum beyond **Part B** (80%) to what you pay to providers.
- No coverage for dental, vision, hearing, et al., & medical services outside the U.S.
- Prescription meds require a Part “D” plan or MAP with a Rx plan.

Medicare Supplement Plans

Original Medicare



▣ The Good:

- Reduces what you pay to providers for Parts A & B.
- 48 Current companies in the market.
- Defined benefit plans: Shop on price and Plan Type. Examples: A, G, K, N Plans
- Guaranteed renewal.
- Change plans at any time (if healthy). **NOTE:** Never change a plan until the new plan and price are determined / agreed to in advance with the company.

▣ The Bad:

- Premiums tend to increase each year.

Medicare Choices

Original Medicare



ca. 61854213

Part A
Hospital



Part B
Drs & Outpt

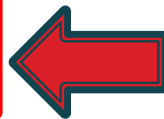


**Medicare Supplement
Insurance (Medi-Gap)**



Part D: Prescription Drugs

- 6 Part "D" Companies for 2025
 - 14 Part "D" Plan Choices
 - 1 **ZERO** Premium Plan
- Review & Change plans only during 2025 Open Enrollment Period (OEP).
(Oct 15 - Dec 7 of 2024)
- Evaluate Total Cost =
Rx Premium + Medication Costs
(Rx Premiums \$0-126.50/mo)



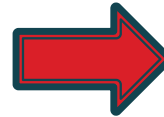
Medicare Choices

□ The Good:

- Lower premiums
- 51 plan choices in Chatham County
- Out of Pocket Maximums
- Most offer dental, vision, hearing, OTC, “Silver Sneakers” fitness.
- Some offer ‘social support’ services

□ The Bad:

- Many plans with similar names
 - Evaluate by Contract ID Number.
- Cost efficiency based on Networks.
- Prior authorization & referrals.
- Verify cost/coverage of meds.



Medicare Advantage Plan

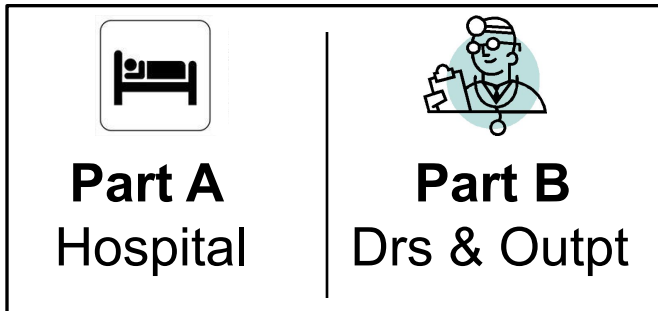
A green rectangular box with a red border. At the top, there are three icons: a hospital bed, a doctor, and a prescription symbol (Rx). Each icon is enclosed in a white square with a black border. Between the icons are blue plus signs. Below the icons, the text 'Part C' is written in bold black font. Below that, the text 'Combines Hospital & Doctor/Outpatient & Prescription Drugs' is written in bold black font, followed by '(Offered by private insurance companies)' in a smaller black font.

Part C

Combines Hospital & Doctor/Outpatient & Prescription Drugs
(Offered by private insurance companies)

Open Enrollment Oct 15–Dec 7

Original Medicare



OR

Medicare Advantage Plan



Real People, Example Savings During OEP



- ✓ \$600: 2 drugs changed co-pay tiers
✓ Via Part "D" or MAP Rx
- ✓ \$2000: One drug no longer covered
✓ Via Part "D" or MAP Rx
- ✓ \$350: Change in preferred pharmacy
✓ Via Part "D" or MAP Rx
- ✓ \$1000: Dental Benefit in MAP Plan
✓ Via MAP Plan Change

“Better Benefits than Original Medicare”

- All **Advantage Plans** have to cover the same services as Original Medicare
 - Can require prior authorization
 - Can require referrals
- Available Advantage Plans are based on your county of residence (ZIP Code)
- Most Advantage Plans do cover additional services (Dental, Vision, Hearing, Fitness, OTC, etc.)
 - Limits on amount of coverage & providers.
 - May be limits on who can receive them.

Choosing Original Medicare or a Medicare Advantage Plan

	Original Medicare w/ MediGap Plan & Part “D” Drug Plan	Medicare Advantage Plan (Combined Plans)
Monthly Premiums	Higher	Lower
Out of Pocket Costs	Medical Care: Part B Deductible/year Rx: Depends on Drug Plan	Co-pay For Each Service; OOP Max \$2,999.-\$9,350./year
Choice of Providers	Most Providers	Provider Network
Out of State Services	Included	ER/UC, More if PPO
Limitations or Restrictions	Very Few	Prior authorizations for some services
Additional Benefits (Dental, etc.)	Not Included	Depends on Plan

Example Add'l MAP Benefits

- **Dental:**
 - You pay \$0 for preventive; 20% for other dental services; max plan pays is \$3000/Year
 - You pay any dentist, reimbursed up to \$2,000/year
- **Vision:** \$0-\$25 exam, \$100-\$300 for glasses or contacts
- **Over the Counter Meds/Supplies:** \$50-175/qtr
Credit for Eligible Products online or via an OTC debit card.
- **Transportation:** 12-36 one-way trips to approved locations
- **Medical Alert systems & In-Home Support** if meet criteria
- **Meals:** 14-28 home delivered meals after discharge

“Better Benefits than Original Medicare”



“You Can Choose Any Provider”

- **With Original Medicare, you can choose to go to any provider in the U.S. that accepts Medicare**
 - ‘Participating’ providers accept Medicare and accept Medicare’s fees as full payment.
 - ‘Non-Participating’ providers accept Medicare but do not accept Medicare’s fees and may charge you an additional 15%. Supplement Plans F & G cover this ‘excess fee’.
 - If your provider has ‘opted-out’ of Medicare, you will be required to pay for their service and cannot receive reimbursement from Medicare.

“You Can Choose Any Provider”

- **All Medicare Advantage Plans have a Network of Providers.**
 - **HMO-Type Advantage Plans:** You must see an ‘In-Network’ Provider
 - **PPO-Type Advantage Plans:** Higher fees if you choose an ‘Out-of-Network’ Provider. Additional benefits (dental, etc.) may be limited to ‘In-Network’ providers.
- **Provider Networks can change at any time**
- **Confirm that your provider is ‘in-network’ with the specific plan before you enroll**

“You Can Choose Any Provider”

Original Medicare:



HMO Advantage Plans:

Some plans allow you to visit any dental provider and be reimbursed up to the allowance amount.



PPO Advantage Plans:

More flexibility than HMO type plans.



“You Can Get More Money in Your Social Security Check”

- **For 2025, several MAP Plans in Chatham County offer a ‘Reduced Part B Premium’ to some extent.**
 - **Some of them have annual deductible amounts that you must pay for some services before they are covered. 7 have “Giveback” in their name.**
 - **Generally higher co-pays & out of pocket maximums. Fewer additional benefits.**
 - **Prescription drug costs may be higher.**
 - **Specifics available from the Company.**



“You Don’t Have to Decide Now”

- ❑ **Open Enrollment is October 15-December 7. Plan choices are effective January 1. Only time to change Part D Drug Plans is during this period.**
- ❑ **From January 1-March 31, you can change:**
 - One Advantage Plan ❑ A different Advantage Plan
 - Advantage Plan ❑ Original Medicare & Drug Plan
- ❑ **Change to a 5-star plan anytime (8Dec24-30Nov25)**
2025 5-Star: Alignment Health Plan IDs: 5296-3, 5296-6

“You Don’t Have to Decide Now”

Medicare Rights

- ❑ **One-time Advantage Plan trial period:** Change back to Original Medicare and same Supplement Plan within 12 months of first enrollment in an Advantage Plan.
- ❑ **Supplement plans** can be purchased at any time, but you may be denied or pay a higher premium based on medical conditions if you are outside a Guaranteed Issue Period:
 - 6 months from effective date of Part B. (IEP Rules)
 - Lost or left employer-sponsored insurance plan that paid secondary to Medicare. (SEP Rules)



“I’m Happy with My Plan so I Don’t Need to Do Anything”

- Generally, you will continue to be enrolled in your current plan unless you take an action during annual Open Enrollment Period (October 15-December 7).
- Part “D” Drug Plans & Advantage Plans change annually; may have significantly higher costs; change in benefits (+ or -); change in pharmacy relationships.
- Benefits of your supplement plan do not change, but premiums generally increase annually.

“We offer a \$0 Premium Plan”

- ❑ Medicare collects the Part B premium from your Social Security check, even if you choose a **ZERO premium** MAP Plan.
- ❑ If you choose a MAP Plan, that Part B premium is sent to the plan you selected to help them pay for your medical costs.
- ❑ 36/51 Advantage Plans for Chatham County residents are **ZERO premium** plans.



Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) Changes for 2025

- Adds \$2,000 out-of-pocket (OOP) Cap in Part “D” **and other drug benefit** changes. Implements provisions of the Bill which are phased in beginning in 2023 and will wrap up in 2029.
- **NOTE: Additional** negotiated **drug price effects** begin to be seen in 2026 (10 meds), in 2027 (15 meds), in 2028 (15 meds), in 2029 (20 meds). [OOP for Insulin capped at \$35.00 in 2023]

Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) Changes for 2025

▣ Medicare Premium Payment Plan (MP3):

- Voluntary Option payment program allows you to manage Out-of-Pocket (OOP) Drug Costs spreading them across the calendar year. All plans offer this payment option.
- MP3 might help you manage monthly expenses, but it doesn't save you money or lower your drug costs.
- Each month you will continue to pay your health or drug premium (if you have one), and you'll get a bill from your plan to pay for your prescription drugs (instead of paying the pharmacy).
- Participating is voluntary and there is no cost to participate. To participate in this payment option, contact your plan.

[Medicare.gov/prescription-payment-plan](https://www.Medicare.gov/prescription-payment-plan)

Protecting Against Medicare Fraud

\$68B lost annually due to fraud

- **Did you receive the services that are billed ?**
 - **Original Medicare:**
 - Medicare Summary Notice (MSN) Quarterly
 - **Advantage Plan:**
 - Explanation of Benefits (EOB)
- **Don't sign blank forms**
- **Never give your Medicare Number over phone**

**Report potential fraud & abuse to NC Senior Medical Patrol:
1-855-408-1212**

Seniors' Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP)

Assistance in understanding and using Medicare.
Sponsored by Chatham County Department on Aging.
A Program of the North Carolina Department of Insurance.

Eastern Center - Pittsboro

Pittsboro Center for Active Living
365 Highway 87 North
Pittsboro, NC 27312
919-542-4512

Western Center – Siler City

Siler City Center for Active Living
112 Village Lake Road
Siler City, NC 27344
919-742-3975

Appointments via Zoom & In-Person:

919-742-3975



Seniors' Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP)

- Chatham County
919-742-3975
- NC Department of Insurance
1-855-408-1212
www.ncshiip.com