

Medicare – 5 Tips for the Season

It's that annual time of year! The ads come out, your neighbors, siblings and friends starting buzzing and asking "what plan do you have? Why do you pay anything – I pay nothing and love my plan... You should have..." Right?

Can I interrupt the fanfare for a few minutes? My company helps people make good Medicare decisions. That's all we do. 100% Medicare. So, we watch you all making the same mistakes just about every hour on the hour!

This short article will point out a few of the most common problems that we see:

- That friend that pays nothing and tells you that you're overpaying? They most likely have an HMO style Medicare Advantage plan. They likely don't know that if they step out of their network, they may have zero coverage. If they have chemo or radiation enter their world? They'll pay 20% of a large number. If they need 18 sessions of PT? They'll pay \$30 each time. If they want to go to Mayo Clinic? They can't. Moral of the story? Don't listen to your friends.
- When agents and insurance companies tell you annually "you can change your plan next year if you don't like this one". Whoa, not so fast. Some people can, some people can't. There are two types of products to supplement your Medicare coverage. There is Medigap and Medicare Advantage. Most people that learn about the two usually want Medigap. But, there's a catch – you have to medically qualify for the product at times. SO, if you can pass the health underwriting in the year after "you don't like your plan" than, yes – welcome aboard the Medigap train!
- Pre-existing conditions. They DO exist after you turn age 65 and hit Medicare eligibility! We're so ingrained with group insurance and generally no pre-existing condition worries but they DO reappear with Medicare. This relates to Medigap coverage. Here's the rule: When you are NEW to Medicare's Part B (and I don't care if you are starting Part B at age 65, age 72, age 75, etc. – the important part is that you are starting it), you have a six-month window of opportunity to purchase a Medigap contract with no health questions asked of you. So, when you and I are speaking, and you tell me that you have MS and get infusions that cost \$30,000 twice a year and you are starting Medicare? We are going to have a serious conversation and I'm doing everything in my power to steer you to a Medigap contract.
- A giant hole in Medicare-Land: People not being introduced to nor understanding the basic premise that "there are two products to pick from to become your supplement". The world tends to focus on Medicare Advantage (think corporate profits or agent commission might have something to do with this? Yes, sarcasm injected). You need to understand what you are buying and the limitations of your product if there are any. Make an informed decision.
- If you buy a Medigap contract, you can go to any doctor or hospital in the country that you choose. As long as they take Medicare (the majority do), you may go. We find that

at age 65, most people want choice and control over their healthcare. With Medicare Advantage you will have networks and restrictions.

So, those are some of the problems that we see over and over again. There are dozens of other issues (prescriptions, Cobra, Obamacare, etc.) but if you know these 5 things, you've become a Medicare genius amongst your friends and family.

We've designed our firm to help you navigate Medicare issues almost in the way that I raised my children. Not to insult anyone's intelligence, but we assist you as if you were 5 years old. Meaning we lay out the steps rather simply.

Example. You call for advice and the response is "please go get Part A and B of Medicare and come back to me and I'll help with your product". That is Greek to you, generally. Online? In person? Where? What do I need? Boomer Health Group will instead send you a video tutorial with the forms that you need to fill out. You'll get guidance as to step A, then B, then C.

You finish step A? Come back for step B. We're not the folks assaulting your phone and mailbox with Medicare solicitations 😊

Best of luck navigating the season! We're here to help as needed.

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