

Mysteries of Medicare: What's new for 2022?

The simple answer is no significant coverage changes. Given the COVID pandemic, the focus has been on prevention and access to care. COVID vaccines, including boosters, and testing are still provided without cost. Medicare has allowed expanded use of telehealth and many providers are having more telephonic or virtual appointments.

The Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) was announced at 5.9%. In 2022 the Part B premium increases to \$170.10 per month and the Part B deductible is \$233 for the year. If you also must pay a Part A deductible, that will be \$1,556 per spell of illness.

The Part D drug deductible will range from \$0-\$480 depending on the plan you choose.

For those with Income-Related Monthly Adjustment Amounts (IRMAA), the income thresholds for additional payment have been adjusted to allow more income before reaching a higher tier.

There have been discussions of offering coverage for dental, vision and hearing to those with Original Medicare. No decisions have been made in this year's budget talks, so coverage may come in later years.

Annual Open Enrollment (AOEP) is now closed for 2022. There are still TV ads and mailings for those using the Health Care Exchanges.

PA MEDI is the new name for the Medicare information program that was formerly known as APPRISE; the program and counselors have not changed. If you would like assistance, PA MEDI counselors are trained and available to provide FREE, personalized, unbiased counseling. Due to continuing COVID-19 concerns and restrictions, in-person appointments are not widely available. Most of the counseling will be done by phone. You can call the General Helpline and leave a message (610-344-5004, option 2). A counselor will return your call within one business day. You can also find helpful information at our website chesco.org/477/PA-Medicare-Education.