



'Care Share

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"Patients Over Paperwork": Meet The New Initiative That Puts Patients First

"Patients over Paperwork (PoP)" is a new initiative launched by the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) in October, 2017. Its aim is to roll back the regulatory burden on health care providers so that they can spend more time with patients. Currently, primary care physicians are spending an estimated 49% of their time on administrative activities. A report commissioned by the American Hospital Association found that hospitals spend nearly \$39 billion per year on administrative activities, or \$1,200 per inpatient hospital admission.

By streamlining and improving the regulatory framework, PoP hopes to improve customer satisfaction of not only beneficiaries but also doctors, hospitals and other Medicare providers. CMS will be traveling the country to gather input from the various stakeholder groups. This will help identify "pain points" for the various groups and serve as a guideline for regulatory reform. The effort will seek to identify the right balance where patient safety and treatment quality remains the top priority while reducing rules and requirements that hinder the patient care process.

If you've been in a doctor's office recently, you've probably seen your care team taking notes on a computer. One of the requirements of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, passed in the wake of the 2008 financial crisis, was that medical providers convert their paper records to digital format and implement an electronic health records (EHR) system. The objectives of these EHR systems were to improve quality, safety, efficiency and care coordination while maintaining patient privacy.

Meeting these objectives has been difficult, however, because the systems often lack what is termed "interoperability"; that is, they can't communicate with each other. System vendors developed their own proprietary data formats rather than basing their systems on a universal standard. PoP is beginning to address this issue as well. In March of this year, CMS announced the MyHealthEData project, another element of Patients Over Paperwork.

The project's objective is to give patients control over their healthcare data. Not only will you be able to get a copy of your entire health record, you'll be able to share it with anyone you choose to trust with it.

This will make it easier to move between healthcare systems or providers because your record, including test results, immunizations and medication details, can follow you wherever you go. Solving the data communication problems should decrease costs for both Medicare and beneficiaries in a myriad of ways, including eliminating duplicative tests and procedures and improving safety by reducing the chances of dangerous medication interactions.

If you would like more information on the Patients over Paperwork initiative, you can review past newsletters [here](#) or [sign up for monthly email updates](#).

Regulatory rollback can be warranted and have positive effects if it is done with care. However, it also may open the door to increased risks for Medicare waste, fraud and abuse. If so, SMP will be here to help!

The Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) helps to educate Medicare beneficiaries about ways to prevent, detect, and combat Medicare fraud. For more information about Medicare fraud, visit the Stop Medicare Fraud website at www.stopmedicarefraud.gov.

Broccoli or Apple Pie... Medicare Nutrition Therapy Can Help You With That Decision!

As American lifestyles have gotten busier, the demand for food that can be purchased and eaten quickly—known as fast food—has gained speed, too. With today's hectic schedules, it can be hard to find time to prepare a healthy meal or exercise. If you need an eating and activity plan that will work for you, Medicare can help.

Medicare covers medical nutrition therapy (MNT) services for people with diabetes or kidney disease. MNT services may include an initial nutrition and lifestyle assessment, one-on-one nutrition counseling, and follow-up visits to check on your progress.

If you are covered by Part B, ask for a referral from your doctor. For beneficiaries in rural areas such as much of Montana, a Registered Dietician or other nutrition professional may be able to provide MNT to you remotely through telehealth services.

You will pay nothing out of pocket for MNT if you have Original Medicare as long as you are seeing a qualified Medicare provider, who must accept assignment. However, be sure to verify the schedule and type of services conforms with Medicare limitations to make sure you don't end up with unexpected bills.

During 2007-2010, American adults consumed an average of 11% of their total daily calories from fast food. More than one-third of U.S. adults are obese, and frequently eating fast food has been shown to contribute to weight gain.

Carrying extra body weight can lead to serious health conditions like diabetes, heart disease, stroke, and some types of cancer.

Medicare Nutrition Therapy (cont.)

If you need help getting started, [MyPlate MyWins](#) offers tips on how to make small changes to improve your diet and find healthy food choices wherever your day may take you. The site offers practical ideas on how to make healthy substitutions at each meal and also for snacks and drinks.

Also, the resources at [Eat Right®](#), a service of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, can help you improve your eating style while reducing food waste. There's a section specifically designed for [seniors](#) that addresses age-related nutrition issues.

Always be wary of fake freebies however, where you receive devices or services you may not need. Call MT SMP if you have questions.

*Adapted from "The Medicare Blog",
<https://blog.medicare.gov/>*

National Headlines

Click on the links for more information. These are great stories to share.

[Scam Gram Vs. Free Health Check Man](#)

Courtesy of Pennsylvania SMP

Watch this short YouTube video about that warns against sharing your Medicare number in exchange for a "free" health screening

[Don't Fall For Pain Relief Cream Scam](#)

Iowa Attorney General

Iowa attorney general warns of pain relief cream scam targeting seniors. You may receive a product that doesn't work and be billed if your insurer won't pay.

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