

MEDICARE, cont. . .

CONTACT

Questions regarding general information contact the Senior Health Insurance Counseling Program (SHIP) which is a non-profit organization helping to inform the public about Medicare and other senior health insurance issues. This division provides accurate and objective counseling, assistance, and advocacy relating to Medicare, Medicaid, Medicare supplements, Medicare Advantage, long-term care, and other related health coverage plans for Medicare beneficiaries, their representatives, or persons soon to be eligible for Medicare.

Senior Help Line:
(800) 763-2828

The Oklahoma Foundation for Medical Quality assist Medicare beneficiaries who feel their rights under Medicare have been denied and/or are concerned about the quality of care they have received.
(800) 522-3414

FINANCIAL CRITERIA

- None

PIECES OF THE PUZZLE

- Anyone who has Medicare Part B can have Medicare help pay for the rental or purchase of durable medical equipment, as long as the equipment is medically necessary. Medical equipment is prescribed by a doctor (or qualified nurse practitioner, physician assistant, or clinical nurse specialist) for use in the home.
- Most people will pay the Medicare Part B premium of \$104.90 in 2013 unless according to their IRS income tax return they earn above a certain amount, in which case they may have an increase in the premium as a result of an Income Related Monthly Adjustment Amount.
- Individuals with low income may qualify for additional financial assistance to help pay for Part B premiums, deductibles and co-payments. To apply for the Qualifying Medicare Benefits Program or Specified Low-Income Medicare Beneficiary Programs, go to the local Oklahoma Department of Human Services County Office.
- Effective July 1, 2013 Oklahoma is part of the new DME competitive bidding program, which changes the amount Medicare pays suppliers for certain durable medical equipment, prosthetics, orthotics, and supplies (DMEPOS) and makes changes to who can supply these items. Under this program, suppliers submit bids to provide certain medical equipment and supplies at a lower price than what Medicare now pays for these items. Medicare uses these bids to set the amount it will pay for those equipment and supplies under the competitive bidding program. Qualified, accredited suppliers with winning bids are chosen as Medicare contract suppliers.
- If the equipment or supplies ordered by the doctor are included in the competitive bidding program, individuals must get their equipment or supplies from a Medicare contract supplier for Medicare to pay for the item.
- Medicare covers power-operated vehicles (scooters), walkers, and wheelchairs as DME that your doctor prescribes for use in your home. Before Medicare helps pay for a power wheelchair you must have a face-to-face examination and a written prescription from a doctor or other treating provider.
- Beginning on July 1, 2013, Medicare beneficiaries who have their diabetic testing supplies delivered will have to get their supplies from a contract supplier in order for Medicare to help pay. Medicare will help pay for supplies if individuals use a mail-order contract supplier or go to their local pharmacy. Local stores don't have to be Medicare contract suppliers unless they're also offering diabetic supplies through the mail.
- The Medicare website, www.medicare.gov/ is very informational. The website also has a directory to look up DME suppliers and physicians online at: www.medicare.gov/