

AFTER MEDICARE ANNUAL ENROLLMENT-What You Should Know

Every year December 7 is the last day for the Medicare Annual Enrollment (AEP). If it's AFTER December 7, then you have to decide if there are any changes you would like to make. I'm assuming we are past December 7 for the Medicare Annual Open Enrollment.

For those of you enrolled in a Medicare Advantage plan (Part C or MA-PD), the Medicare Annual Enrollment Period (October 15 thru December 7) provided you the opportunity to review your Medicare Advantage plan. As a current member you may have received information regarding plan changes such as a decrease/increase in copays, coinsurance, and out of pocket maximum. There might have been changes in the provider network (doctors, hospitals, clinics, etc) and/or the drug formulary (list of drugs covered by the plan).

If you had a Medicare drug plan (PDP), it should have been reviewed. The Medicare drug plan may have mailed an Annual Notice of Change. Even if the number or type of prescription drugs you currently use did not change, you should have checked the notice. Changes might include an increase/decrease in monthly premium, the annual plan deductible, the drug formulary, and/or the drug tiers.

If you were enrolled in a Medicare Supplement, you had the opportunity to enroll in a Medicare Advantage plan with drug (MA-PD) coverage effective January 1. The Medicare Advantage plan replaced the Supplement AND Medicare drug plan.

Let's say that for some reason you change your mind about the Medicare Advantage plan you kept or the new one you chose for next year. You have options AFTER December 7. There is still time to do something different. Examples of possibilities include: disenroll from the Medicare Advantage with drug coverage (MA-PD) and return to Original Medicare. In this scenario you should enroll in a Medicare drug plan (PDP) so that you can have drug coverage and won't be fined. Or you could enroll in a new Medicare Advantage plan with drug coverage (MA-PD).

During the Annual Enrollment Period (AEP), October 15-December 7, if you were enrolled in a Medicare Advantage plan with drug coverage (MA-PD), you could change plans as many times as you wanted. However, the last plan you chose and submitted by December 7 determined which Medicare Advantage plan you are enrolled in effective January 1.

In the Medicare Advantage Open Enrollment (OEP) from January 1-March 31, you can disenroll in Medicare Advantage plan you selected by December 7th and enroll in a new Medicare Advantage plan. But you can only do that once.

Medicare Drug plans (PDP) cannot be changed after December 7th.

Call the agent who helped you enroll during AEP. Discuss with them why you want to make changes or why you are unhappy with your choices. A knowledgeable agent can advise you regarding the rules for OEP.