

## ANNUAL ENROLLMENT



### **How Should I Prepare for Medicare Annual Enrollment? Will My Plan be Available Next Year?**

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Each year October 15 until December 7 is the window of opportunity to compare your current plan with other plans available. The plan you choose during annual enrollment becomes effective January 1 of the following year. If you're happy with your plan and do nothing, the plan rolls over, unless it will be terminated.

Many times, our family and friends have good intentions and will suggest a particular company or plan. This is not good advice for you. The reason is because your Medicare plan is all about you. Plans are based on several factors like your health, your meds, your doctors, and your lifestyle to name a few.

The best place to start is with the Annual Notice of Change (ANOC). Every year in September, Medicare plan recipients receive the ANOC. You can compare line item by line item your current plan's costs and benefits against next year's plan. You may need to seek other options if your plan cost has greatly increased, or benefits have changed. Some things to consider are the monthly premium, annual deductible, co-pays and network. Review the ANOC carefully this year. It will state what next year's benefits will be or if your plan is being terminated.

Several advantage plans and drug plans ARE terminating this year. What does this mean for you? You must choose another plan. AETNA is terminating two of their most popular advantage plans. UnitedHealthcare is terminating a couple of their advantage plans. WellCare drug plans have been a staple in the marketplace for the past couple years. If you do not take medication or if your meds are tier one or tier two, WellCare was the most economical choice. However, WellCare and Mutual of Omaha are terminating their prescription drug plans.

Now is also the time to do a personal inventory of your health needs. Do you have any specific healthcare needs that have changed? Have your medications, doctors, hospital, or pharmacy changed?

Seek out to compare all your options in your service area. With all the turmoil this year with Medicare advantage and prescription drug plans, make your appointment early. Don't wait until the last minute. Make sure you are using a broker who can help you review and compare all the plans and has the knowledge to help you make an educated decision. Call today and get your appointment on the calendar.

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