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AARP Celebrates 49th Anniversary of Medicare

Unveils New Consumer Tool

WASHINGTON — On the eve of Medicare’s 49th anniversary, AARP introduces a new [Medicare Q & A Tool](#) that provides consumers with easy-to-understand answers to commonly asked questions on insurance plan choices, coverage, and costs. The free online tool helps people understand eligibility requirements, gives useful information on how Medicare works, and explains when they may enroll.

“President Lyndon Johnson signed Medicare into law 49 years ago on July 30, 1965, and AARP has proudly fought to protect and strengthen this critical health coverage for current and future generations,” said **AARP Executive Vice President Nancy LeaMond**. “In addition to remaining a strong advocate for the tens of millions of Americans who depend on Medicare for their health security, AARP is also dedicated to creating useful consumer resources like our new Q&A tool.”

Medicare has recently been improved for beneficiaries through the phased-in closure of the coverage gap in the drug benefit—also known as the “doughnut hole”—and by the addition of no co-pay preventive health screenings. Increased protections have been added to help curb waste, fraud, and abuse and extend the life of the Medicare Trust Fund.

A [recent report](#) shows that, in addition to these recently enacted savings in Medicare, there has been a significant slowing of overall Medicare spending over the last few years, resulting in a roughly \$1,000 drop in spending per person. These savings—nearly \$1 trillion dollars over 10 years—should lead to lower premiums and out-of-pocket costs for Medicare beneficiaries, as well as a more stable Medicare program. Additionally, [\\$19.2 billion](#) has been recovered from Medicare fraud over the last five years, according to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.

“Medicare is a promise of health security for all Americans,” added LeaMond. “AARP will continue fighting to protect and strengthen Medicare for current and future generations so that millions of Americans will maintain their access to affordable, guaranteed health care.”

Although Medicare faces some challenges in the future, AARP will continue to advocate for responsible, commonsense solutions to strengthen Medicare—including lowering prescription drug costs, improving health care coordination, and cracking down on over-testing, waste, and fraud—to ensure Medicare’s promise of health security for current and future generations.

Additional AARP Consumer Resources:

- [Medicare Q & A Tool](#) – Provides fast access to easy-to-understand answers about Medicare. (Also available in a [mobile-friendly format](#) and in Spanish in mid-September).
- [Medicare Webinars](#) – Join us on September 18 for a free webinar on “Transitioning to Medicare” and again on October 30 for “Preparing for Medicare Open Enrollment.”
- [Doughnut Hole Calculator](#) – A four-step tool to help avoid the Medicare drug coverage “Doughnut Hole.” Also available in Spanish.
- [Medicaid & Medicare News](#) – News, updates, and tips for consumers to make the most of their health care coverage.
- [Understanding Your Medicare Statement](#) – A decoder tool to help people read their Medicare statements and watch for fraud.

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About AARP

AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, with a membership of nearly 38 million, that helps people turn their goals and dreams into real possibilities, strengthens communities and fights for the issues that matter most to families such as healthcare, employment and income security, retirement planning, affordable utilities and protection from financial abuse. We advocate for individuals in the marketplace by selecting products and services of high quality and value to carry the AARP name as well as help our members obtain discounts on a wide range of products, travel, and services. A trusted source for lifestyle tips, news and educational information, AARP produces AARP The Magazine, the world’s largest circulation magazine; AARP Bulletin; [www.aarp.org](#); AARP TV & Radio; AARP Books; and AARP en Español, a Spanish-language website addressing the

interests and needs of Hispanics. AARP does not endorse candidates for public office or make contributions to political campaigns or candidates. The AARP Foundation is an affiliated charity that provides security, protection, and empowerment to older persons in need with support from thousands of volunteers, donors, and sponsors. AARP has staffed offices in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Learn more at www.aarp.org.

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