



The Maryland State Medical Society

News: For Immediate Release
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OPEN ENROLLMENT FOR MEDICARE ENDS THIS WEEK

BALTIMORE, December 4, 2023 – MedChi, The Maryland State Medical Society, is reminding Marylanders that open enrollment to buy, change, or renew a qualified health plan for 2024 is open now and the last day to change Medicare options is Thursday, December 7th 2023.

For those who qualify for Medicaid, enrollment is year-round and Medicaid-eligible Marylanders may start their coverage immediately. Marylanders who are enrolled in Medicaid must renew their Medicaid coverage once a year through the Maryland Health Connection. For those who want to enroll in a Medicare plan, or make changes to existing Medicare coverage, Open Enrollment continues through December 7. For additional Medicare plan information, individuals may call 1-800-MEDICARE or visit www.medicare.gov. Individuals do not need to renew their coverage if they are satisfied with their current plans, and those plans are still offered through Medicare.

When reviewing potential health plans, research your health care plan options. MedChi recommends you consider the following five questions:

1. Make sure your family's physicians are in-network or you'll be faced with unnecessarily expensive medical bills In-network providers will save you from these additional costs.
2. Check your family's prescription medications against the list of plan-approved drugs. Choosing a plan that doesn't cover your regular medications will increase your family's health care costs.
3. Determine the plan's prior authorization and step therapy policies. Prior authorization requires physicians to obtain the carrier's approval before the carrier will pay for certain medications or treatment. Step therapy policies require physicians to prescribe cheaper alternatives before the insurer will cover the preferred treatment.
4. Estimate the full cost of each plan, compare co-pays, deductibles, and other out-of-pocket expenses that you will be responsible for.
5. Reading the plan materials thoroughly so will know your rights and responsibilities under each plan and hopefully prevent unexpected costs.

MedChi CEO Gene Ransom stresses the importance of getting the best health care plan for you and your family. "Access to insurance doesn't equate to access to healthcare, but having health insurance is a step in the right direction."

Answers to common questions about Open Enrollment can be found by calling MedChi at 1-800-492-1056 x 3311. This is the time to encourage your patients to make choices about their health insurance. If you know someone who doesn't have insurance, encourage them to look at the Maryland Exchange or Maryland Health Connection to see what is available.

About MedChi

MedChi, The Maryland State Medical Society, is a non-profit membership association of Maryland physicians. It is the largest physician organization in Maryland. The mission of MedChi is to serve as Maryland's foremost advocate and resource for physicians, their patients and the public health of Maryland. For more information, please visit www.medchi.org.