

Understanding Medicare and Medicaid

As a senior, one of the most important things for peace of mind and security is healthcare and being able to financially afford essential healthcare and medical procedures. Medicare and Medicaid are the most widely used insurance programs among seniors to help cover most medical expenses. Understanding the differences between Medicare and Medicaid is an important step, as is understanding which program you are



What is Medicare?

Medicare is a federal government-sponsored insurance program that covers healthcare and other medical expenses for those who are over the age of 65, or who have disabilities that qualify them for the program. It is important to know that Medicare will assist those eligible by covering the cost of healthcare, but does not cover all medical or long-term care expenses. Those who are enrolled in Medicare have their medical expenses reimbursed through a trust fund that they have already invested their own money into.

How Do I Know If I'm Eligible for Medicare?

Anyone over the age of 65 is automatically eligible for Medicare. You may also be eligible if you are younger than 65 and have a disability, or have End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD). There are also two parts to Medicare that you could qualify for. The first part is called Part A, also known as Hospital Insurance. Anyone can be eligible for Part A without premiums if they are over the age of 65 and are either a citizen or are a permanent resident within the United States. There is also Part A Premium. A premium that you buy into and is available to you if you are over the age of 65 and if you or your spouse have paid Medicare taxes while working.

The second part of a Medicare plan is called Part B, also known as Medicare Insurance. Part B does not have a premium version or a free version like Part A. If you want Part B, it must be bought. Typically this premium is paid for through deductions of your Social Security, Civil Services or Railroad Retirement checks. If you do not receive any of these types of payments then Medicare bill you every 3 months for Part B Premium.

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What is Medicaid?

Medicaid is a health insurance program that provides financial coverage of medical expenses for low income families. Medicaid, unlike Medicare, determines eligibility based on income rather than age or disability. Medicaid is also a federal and state program which means that the program must follow federal standards. It is state administered and eligibility changes from state-to-state so check with your state to see what plan is right for you.

How Do I Know If I'm Eligible for Medicaid?

Eligibility for Medicaid is determined by income and family size. All state's Medicaid plans provide health insurance for certain low-income families or individuals. However, eligibility for Medicaid from state-to-state is determined by a certain qualification of income and family size. There are two ways in which you can find out if you qualify for Medicaid in your specific state.

First, check out the Medicaid website of your specific state. Some states are expanding the level of income required so it is important to know whether or not your state is expanding to see if you fall under eligibility. Second, if your state is expanding, check out the Healthcare.gov website and use their chart to find out if you qualify.

At Carmelite System communities, all residents have the assurance of being honored, treated, respected, and cared for. With our history in senior care, you can count on us to provide personalized services and care customized to your or your loved one's individual needs. Likewise, with our foundation in the church, we celebrate faith-based senior care and welcome residents of all religious backgrounds. The Carmelite System does not discriminate pursuant to the federal Fair Housing Act.

About Mount Carmel Care Center

Mount Carmel Care Center in Lenox, MA is committed to providing a welcoming, person-centered environment and atmosphere of a "Home." Our services include rehabilitation, long-term care, respite care, and palliative care, and our community offers nutritional services, a variety of therapy options, and health education and support services for residents and families. Mount Carmel Care Center's senior care experts are ready to answer your questions and connect you with the right services at the best time for you.



To learn more or schedule a tour, call 413.637.2660 x13 or visit: www.mountcarmelcare.org
320 Pittsfield Road
Lenox, MA 01240