

Improved Medicare Plans

Good choices as open enrollment begins

BY MARILYN TAVENNER



Now is the time for people with Medicare to review their current Medicare coverage, as Medicare Open Enrollment is underway with a Dec. 7 deadline to make any changes.

Medicare wants everyone to know that quality continues to improve both in Medicare Advantage and in the Part D Prescription Drug Program.

Each year, plan costs and coverage can change. During open enrollment, seniors and people with disabilities across the country have the opportunity to review their current Medicare coverage and see if they want to make any changes for the next year. It's important for people with Medicare to take the time to make sure their current situation still meets their health care needs best.

To help people choose a plan, Medicare calculates plan "star ratings" for Medicare health and prescription drug plans. Each plan gets a number of stars on a scale of 1 to 5—with 5 being the best—based on quality and performance. These rat-

ings are designed to help people with Medicare, their families, and caregivers compare plans, in addition to information on their premiums and benefits.

This year, people with Medicare who choose to enroll in a Medicare health or prescription drug plan will have access to more high-rated, four- and five-star plans than ever before. Approximately 60 percent of Medicare Advantage enrollees are in a Medicare Advantage Plan earning four or more stars in 2015, compared to an estimated 17 percent back in 2009. Likewise, about 53 percent of Part D enrollees are currently enrolled in stand-alone prescription drug plans with four or more stars for 2015, compared to just 16 percent in 2009.

If you have Medicare and need assistance, you can visit Medicare.gov, call 1-800-633-4227, or contact your State Health Insurance Assistance Program. You should have received the 2015 "Medicare & You" Handbook and important notices from your current plan, Medicare, or Social Security about changes to your coverage.

Medicare is working hard to make sure that seniors and people with disabilities will continue to get the health care coverage they deserve.

Marilyn Tavenner is the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services administrator.

Obituary

In Loving Memory Frelimo Amili

Frelimo Amili, also known as Freddie Mitchell Whitlow was born Jan. 7, 1951, in Vancouver, to Annie Ruth Whitlow and Freddie Mitchell Ford. He was the third of eight siblings.

An active child, very intelligent and outgoing, he attended King (Highland) Grade School, Jefferson High school, and earned an associate's degree at Portland Community College. He enjoyed athletics and was good at boxing and basketball.

He was an avid reader and photographer, learned from many others and gave himself a thorough education in black history and politics. He joined the Black Panther Party during an historic period in Portland and had his share of run-ins with local authorities. He was not one to submit willingly to oppression and could not be kept from stating his opinion.

Survivors include his six children, Marcella, Quitasha, Sareeta, Frelimo Omari, Yakini, and Austin; and a step-daughter Nikki. He is also survived by his mother Annie Ruth Whitlow; and siblings, nieces and nephews: Linda Washington (Tyrone, Jason), Nabeeh Mustafa aka Dennis Whitlow (DeAundrea, Warith, Zarinah), Ruth Whitlow (Lateefah, Roney Jr., DePrince, Kamilyaa), Richard Whitlow (Ethan), Jahmez Amili aka James Whitlow (Jahmez, Tierra, Cierra), Jean Norwood (Jamaal, Rowan III), Brian Frazier (Christie), and a host of grandchildren, great grand nephews and nieces and cousins.

Frelimo moved to Seattle in the mid-80s where he made his home and where he was living at the time of his transition. We pray that Almighty God forgive Frelimo's faults, see his goodness, and admit him into Paradise.



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