

Demystifying Medicare Advantage Plans Part 1

4 Key Points for Informed Decision-Making

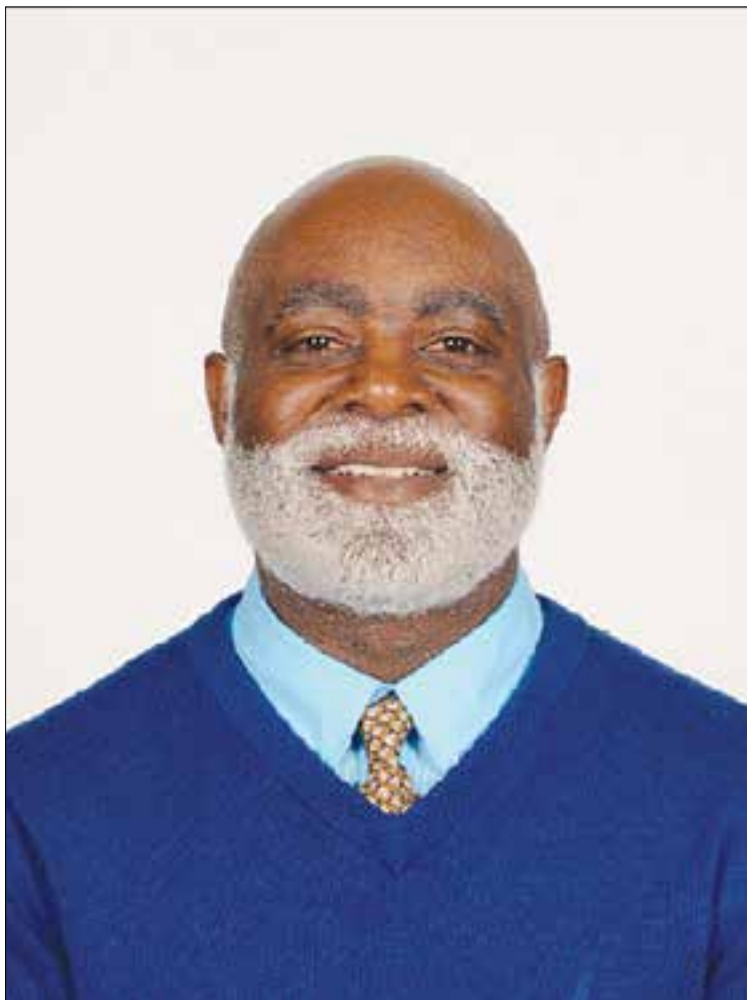
Medicare Advantage plans, also known as Medicare Part C, are complicated and a popular choice for seniors and individuals with disabilities seeking comprehensive healthcare coverage. While these plans offer a wide range of benefits, there are crucial details that Medicare-eligible individuals should understand to make informed healthcare decisions. Here are four key points to consider when choosing a Medicare Advantage plan.

1. Understand the Basics: Medicare Advantage plans are offered by private insurance companies that are contracted with the government. These plans are required to provide the same level of coverage as Original Medicare (Medicare Part A and Part B). Most Medicare Advantage plans also include extra benefits such as prescription drug coverage, dental, vision, hearing care, and alternative therapies like natural path chiropractic and acupuncture. It's essential

to carefully review the plans available in your area to find one that matches your specific healthcare needs. However, comparing plans can be complicated, so seeking professional assistance is recommended.

2. Network Limitations: Most Medicare Advantage plans, particularly those following the Health Maintenance Organization (HMO) model, have a network of doctors and hospitals. This differs from Original Medicare, which allows you to see any healthcare provider that accepts Medicare. Some plans, known as Preferred Provider Organizations (PPOs), offer out-of-network coverage but may come with higher costs. Check whether your healthcare providers are part of the plan's network and consider how this could impact your access to care. Note that HMO plans often require referrals to see specialists, while PPOs may allow self-referrals.

3. Cost Considerations: Medicare Advantage plans can have lower or even zero premiums compared to Original Medicare, which only pays for 80 percent of most hospital and doctor visits. Making Medicare Advantage plans at-



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tractive to cost-conscious individuals like you. However, it's crucial to consider the total cost of care, including premi-

ums, deductibles, copayments, coinsurance, and out-of-pocket maximums. Comparing these expenses can be challenging,

so it's advisable to seek assistance to determine which plan is the most cost-effective for your specific needs.

4. Annual Changes and Flexibility: Medicare Advantage plans have the option to change their coverage, costs, and network providers each year. While most plans aim to remain stable from year to year, it's important to review your plan's Annual Notice of Change (ANOC) to stay informed about any changes that might affect your coverage or expenses. Consider what you like and dislike about your current plan. If you find too many disadvantages, remember that you have the option to switch to another Medicare Advantage plan or return to Original Medicare during the Annual Enrollment Period (AEP), which is NOW from October 15th through December 7th.

Making an informed decision about your Medicare Advantage plan is crucial for your healthcare and financial well-being. Seek assistance from professionals who can guide you through the complexities and help you find the plan that best suits your unique needs is a must.

Obituary

It is with heavy hearts that we remember the incredible impact of James and Lisa Johnson on the Portland community. On October 28th, 2023, we lost two pillars of our community who embodied the true essence of love and generosity. Their journey began as teenagers at Jefferson High School, where they became inseparable best friends, and over the years, their bond only grew stronger as they pursued their passions.

James Johnson's legacy extends far beyond his years, as he touched the lives of thousands of families through his non-profit organization, Academic Court Enhancement. For over four decades, he dedicated himself to building character, integrity, and resilience in disadvantaged youth through the sport of basketball. His commitment to coaching, training, and welcoming numerous families, all without charge, has left an indelible mark on our community. Lisa was his constant companion, the unsung hero, and the driving force behind their shared mission.

Lisa Johnson's contribution to our community was equally remarkable. Her expertise and one-of-a-kind personality provided a strong foundation for the



countless families who found a home through Academic Court Enhancement. With her extensive knowledge in accounting and finance, she not only supported her husband's noble endeavor but also assisted many local businesses in thriving efficiently. Her tax business served as a cornerstone for our community, ensuring that businesses had the financial guidance they needed to succeed.

Together, James and Lisa Johnson created opportunities for the

youth in our community to lead sustainable lives, both on and off the basketball court. Their dedication, love, and generosity have left an enduring legacy that will continue to inspire and uplift our community for generations to come.

Details for their Celebration of Life services will be shared with the community at the earliest opportunity.

With love and appreciation,
Marcus, Tanaira and
Tanesha Johnson

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- Call or text today and **Derek will help find the ideal plan for you or your loved ones.** In-person or virtual appointments available. See if a zero-premium plan is right for you.
- With over 7 years of experience in the healthcare field and a social work background, **Derek seeks to simplify the complexities of your Medicare options.**
- Derek's commitment empowers you to secure the optimal plan for your health and financial well-being.
- Derek's multi-state licenses ensure he can remain your trusted advisor.

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