



We Can Fix Medicare AND the Deficit

As you may have heard, President Obama has announced a deficit reduction plan that includes significant changes to Medicare.

The President's plan is certainly a step up from Republican's voucher plan. It remains a true Medicare program; it does not increase the age of eligibility; and it reduces drug costs for low-income beneficiaries. These are important provisions that the Center for Medicare Advocacy has repeatedly recommended.

Still, President Obama's plan includes some troubling items, including increased cost-sharing for beneficiaries – especially for people with long-term conditions. We need your help to ensure a full Medicare program and a fair deficit reduction strategy.

[Help us by calling on the President and Congress to adopt these common-sense solutions toward reducing our deficit:](#)

Our Six-Point Solution includes:

1. **Negotiate Drug Prices with Pharmaceutical Companies** – Drug companies have gained *47 million* customers since Medicare began covering prescription drugs, but they did not have to adjust their prices in return.
2. **Stop Paying Private Medicare Plans More Than Traditional Medicare** - Beneficiaries in private plans pay more but often have more limitations on coverage than they would under traditional Medicare.
3. **Include a Drug Benefit in Traditional Medicare** - A drug benefit in Medicare would encourage people to stay in the program and save money for taxpayers.
4. **Extend Medicaid Drug Rebates to Medicare Dual Eligibles** - People eligible for both Medicare and Medicaid comprise one-fourth of all Medicare drug users. Extending rebates available to Medicaid users would save Medicare least \$30 billion over ten years.
5. **Lower the Age of Medicare Eligibility** – You read right. Lowering the age of Medicare eligibility to 55 would add revenue from people who will likely need less care and fewer services than older and disabled enrollees.
6. **Let the Affordable Care Act Do Its Job** – Repealing or defunding health care reform would add \$230 billion to the deficit while ignoring the real issue of rising overall health care costs.

[Help us protect Medicare and reduce the deficit.](#)

Tell President Obama and Congress that shifting costs from the federal government to beneficiaries and their families – whether through a voucher program or increased cost-sharing – is a perversion of Medicare's original intent: to protect older people and their families from illness and financial ruin due to health care costs. Plus, it's not needed for deficit reduction!

[With your help, our Six Solutions](#) can improve the financial welfare of Medicare and the country, without doing so at the expense of older and disabled people.

Thank you in advance,

Judith Stein
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