

For more than four decades, Medicare has provided health care to millions of seniors and people with disabilities. Traditionally, Medicare's focus has been treating disease, not preventing it. That is all changing with the Affordable Care Act. Provisions in the health care law create new benefits, such as a yearly wellness visit, and make many preventive services and screenings for conditions like diabetes, high cholesterol, and cancer, as well as vaccinations, free for beneficiaries.

This new emphasis on prevention will not only benefit people on Medicare by detecting diseases early, when they are the most treatable, but it will go a long way toward reducing the \$2 trillion that the United States spends on treating preventable, chronic illnesses.

But these new benefits will only be effective if seniors and people with disabilities understand their new rights.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has begun a preventive benefits campaign called "Share the News, Share the Health" to help spread the word to the Medicare community about the many preventive services that are available at no cost under the health care law. [They have created several valuable resources explaining the new services and how best to spread the word to ensure the services are being used.](#)

Families USA has also developed a series of fact sheets aimed at both advocates and Medicare recipients that discuss how people on Medicare can take advantage of these benefits and how advocates can answer questions and resolve any problems beneficiaries may encounter.

For consumers:

[Medicare's New Preventive Care Benefit: What It Means for You](#)
[Medicare's New Wellness Visit: What It Means for You](#)

For advocates:

[An Advocate's Guide to the New Preventive Services Benefit in Medicare](#)
[An Advocate's Guide to the New Annual Wellness Visit Benefit in Medicare](#)

Please use these resources to reach out and educate your communities about the new Medicare preventive services. Healthy communities are informed and empowered. Thank you for all of your work to help spread the word and ensure people on Medicare get the care they need.

Best wishes,

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