



January 1 – December 31, 2012

Evidence of Coverage:

Your Medicare Health Benefits and Services as a Member of HealthPartners® Freedom Vital (Cost)

This booklet gives you the details about your Medicare health care coverage from January 1 – December 31, 2012. It explains how to get the health care you need covered. This is an important legal document. Please keep it in a safe place.

This plan, HealthPartners Freedom Vital, is offered by Group Health Plan, Inc. (GHI). (When this *Evidence of Coverage* says “we,” “us,” or “our,” it means Group Health Plan, Inc. (GHI). When it says “plan” or “our plan,” it means HealthPartners Freedom Vital.

A health plan with a Medicare contract.

Benefits, premium, and/or copayments/coinsurance may change on January 1, 2013.

2012 Evidence of Coverage

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SECTION 1 Introduction

Section 1.1	You are enrolled in HealthPartners Freedom Vital, which is a Medicare Cost Plan
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You are covered by Medicare, and you have chosen to get your Medicare health care coverage through our plan, HealthPartners Freedom Vital.

There are different types of Medicare health plans. HealthPartners Freedom Vital is a Medicare Cost Plan. Like all Medicare health plans, this Medicare Cost Plan is approved by Medicare and run by a private company.

Section 1.2	What is the <i>Evidence of Coverage</i> booklet about?
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This *Evidence of Coverage* booklet tells you how to get your Medicare medical care covered through our plan. This booklet explains your rights and responsibilities, what is covered, and what you pay as a member of the plan.

This plan, HealthPartners Freedom Vital is offered by Group Health Plan, Inc. (GHI). (When this *Evidence of Coverage* says “we,” “us,” or “our,” it means Group Health Plan, Inc. (GHI). When it says “plan” or “our plan,” it means HealthPartners Freedom Vital.)

The word “coverage” and “covered services” refers to the medical care and services available to you as a member of our plan.

Section 1.3	What does this Chapter tell you?
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Look through Chapter 1 of this *Evidence of Coverage* to learn:

- What makes you eligible to be a plan member?
- What is your plan’s service area?
- What materials will you get from us?
- What is your plan premium and how can you pay it?
- How do you keep the information in your membership record up to date?

Section 1.4 What if you are new to our plan?

If you are a new member, then it's important for you to learn how the plan operates – what the rules are and what services are available to you. We encourage you to set aside some time to look through this *Evidence of Coverage* booklet.

If you are confused or concerned or just have a question, please contact our plan's Member Services (contact information is on the back cover of this booklet).

Section 1.5 Legal information about the *Evidence of Coverage*

It's part of our contract with you

This *Evidence of Coverage* is part of our contract with you about how our plan covers your care. Other parts of this contract include your enrollment form, and any notices you receive from us about changes to your coverage or conditions that affect your coverage. These notices are sometimes called “riders” or “amendments.”

The contract is in effect for months in which you are enrolled in our plan between January 1, 2012 and December 31, 2012.

Medicare must approve our plan each year

Medicare (the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services) must approve HealthPartners Freedom Vital each year. You can continue to get Medicare coverage as a member of our plan only as long as we choose to continue to offer the plan for the year in question and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services renews its approval of the plan.

SECTION 2 What makes you eligible to be a plan member?

Section 2.1 Your eligibility requirements

You are eligible for membership in our plan as long as:

- You live in our geographic service area (section 2.3 below describes our service area)
- -- *and* -- you are entitled to Medicare Part A
- -- *and* -- you are enrolled in Medicare Part B
- -- *or* -- you are enrolled in Medicare Part B only
- -- *and* -- you do *not* have End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD), with limited exceptions, such as if you develop ESRD when you are already a member of a plan that we offer, or you were a member of a different plan that was terminated.

Section 2.2 What are Medicare Part A and Medicare Part B?

When you originally signed up for Medicare, you received information about how to get Medicare Part A and Medicare Part B. Remember:

- Medicare Part A generally covers services furnished by institutional providers such as hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, or home health agencies.
- Medicare Part B is for most other medical services (such as physician's services and other outpatient services) and certain items (such as durable medical equipment and supplies).

Section 2.3 Here is the plan service area for our plan

Although Medicare is a Federal program, our plan is available only to individuals who live in our plan service area. To remain a member of our plan, you must keep living in this service area. The service area is described below.

Our service area includes these counties in Minnesota: The service area consists of all of the counties in Minnesota, as follows: Aitkin, Anoka, Becker, Beltrami, Benton, Big Stone, Blue Earth, Brown, Carlton, Carver, Cass, Chippewa, Chisago, Clay, Clearwater, Cook, Cottonwood, Crow Wing, Dakota, Dodge, Douglas, Faribault, Fillmore, Freeborn, Goodhue, Grant, Hennepin, Houston, Hubbard, Isanti, Itasca, Jackson, Kanabec, Kandiyohi, Kittson, Koochiching, Lac qui Parle, Lake, Lake of the Woods, LeSueur, Lincoln, Lyon, Mahnommen, Marshall, Martin, McLeod, Meeker, Mille Lacs, Morrison, Mower, Murray, Nicollet, Nobles, Norman, Olmsted, Otter Tail, Pennington, Pine, Pipestone, Polk, Pope, Ramsey, Red Lake, Redwood, Renville, Rice, Rock, Roseau, St. Louis, Scott, Sherburne, Sibley, Stearns, Steele, Stevens, Swift, Todd, Traverse, Wabasha, Wadena, Waseca, Washington, Watonwan, Wilkin, Winona, Wright and Yellow Medicine.

If you plan to move out of the service area, please contact Member Services. When you move, you will have a Special Enrollment Period that will allow you to switch to Original Medicare or enroll in a Medicare health or drug plan that is available in your new location.

SECTION 3 What other materials will you get from us?

Section 3.1 Your plan membership card – Use it to get the care covered by our plan

We will send you a plan membership card. You should use this card whenever you get covered services from a HealthPartners Freedom Vital network provider. Here’s a sample membership card to show you what yours will look like:

 HealthPartners [®] Issuer (80840) ID 99999999 Group ### Renewal Mo. Name JANE K DOE January Care Type HealthPartners Freedom (Cost)	Emergency & Urgently Needed Care For emergency situations, call 911 and/or get medical attention immediately. For medical advice call the CareLine SM nurse service any time at 612-339-3663 or 800-551-0859 or call your clinic at 952-555-5555 . Hospital Admissions Contact CareCheck SM at 866-276-8555 for any admission not directed by a network physician. Claims Submission Medical: HealthPartners Claims, P.O. Box 1289, Minneapolis, MN 55440-1289 Preventive Dental: HealthPartners Dental Claims, P.O. Box 1172, Minneapolis, MN 55440-1172. Member Services: HealthPartners Member Services, P.O. Box 9463, Minneapolis, MN, 55440-9463, phone 952-883-7979 or 800-233-9645 . For TTY call 952-883-6060 or 800-443-0156. Minnesota Commissioner of Health Appeals: phone 651-201-5100 or 800-657-3916.								
<table border="0"><tr><td>Office</td><td>\$##.00</td></tr><tr><td>RxBIN 003585 RxPCN 24002</td><td>See Contract</td></tr><tr><td>ER</td><td>\$##.00</td></tr><tr><td>Urgent</td><td>\$##.00</td></tr></table>	Office	\$##.00	RxBIN 003585 RxPCN 24002	See Contract	ER	\$##.00	Urgent	\$##.00	healthpartners.com Offered by Group Health, Inc.
Office	\$##.00								
RxBIN 003585 RxPCN 24002	See Contract								
ER	\$##.00								
Urgent	\$##.00								

If your plan membership card is damaged, lost, or stolen, call Member Services right away and we will send you a new card.

Because our plan is a Medicare Cost Plan, you should also **keep your red, white, and blue Medicare card with you**. As a Cost Plan member, if you receive Medicare-covered services (except for emergency or urgent care) from an out-of-network provider or when you are outside of our service area, these services will be paid for by Original Medicare, not our plan. In these cases, you will be responsible for Original Medicare deductibles and coinsurance. (If you receive emergency or urgent care from an out-of-network provider or when you are outside of our service area, our plan will pay for these services.) It is important that you keep your red, white, and blue Medicare card with you for when you receive services paid for under Original Medicare.

Section 3.2 The *Provider Directory*: Your guide to all providers in the plan’s network

Every year that you are a member of our plan, we will send you either a new *Provider Directory* or an update to your *Provider Directory*. This directory lists our network providers.

What are “network providers”?

Network providers are the doctors and other health care professionals, medical groups, hospitals, and other health care facilities that have an agreement with us to accept our payment and any plan cost

sharing as payment in full. We have arranged for these providers to deliver covered services to members in our plan. However, members of our plan may also get services from out-of-network providers. If you get care from out-of-network providers, you will pay the cost-sharing amounts under Original Medicare.

If you don't have your copy of the *Provider Directory*, you can request a copy from Member Services. You may ask Member Services for more information about our network providers, including their qualifications. You can also see the *Provider Directory* at healthpartners.com/medicare, or download it from this website. Both Member Services and the website can give you the most up-to-date information about changes in our network providers.

“Network” means the participating providers described in the Provider Directory.

SECTION 4 Your monthly premium for our plan

Section 4.1 How much is your plan premium?
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As a member of our plan, you pay a monthly plan premium. For 2012, the monthly premium for our plan is \$53.00. In addition, you must continue to pay your Medicare Part B premium (unless your Part B premium is paid for you by Medicaid or another third party).

In some situations, your plan premium could be more

In some situations, your plan premium could be more than the amount listed above in Section 4.1.

- If you signed up for extra benefits, also called “optional supplemental benefits”, then you pay an additional premium each month for these extra benefits. The additional monthly premium in 2012 for the Freedom Comprehensive Dental Plan is \$38.37. If you have any questions about your plan premiums, please call Member Services.

Many members are required to pay other Medicare premiums

Some plan members will be paying a premium for Medicare Part A and most plan members will be paying a premium for Medicare Part B, in addition to paying the monthly plan premium. You must continue paying your Medicare Part B premium to remain a member of the plan.

- Your copy of *Medicare & You 2012* gives information about these premiums in the section called “2012 Medicare Costs.” This explains how the Part B premium differs for people with different incomes.
- Everyone with Medicare receives a copy of *Medicare & You* each year in the fall. Those new to Medicare receive it within a month after first signing up. You can also download a copy of *Medicare & You 2012* from the Medicare website (<http://www.medicare.gov>). Or, you can order a printed copy by phone at 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227), 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. TTY users call 1-877-486-2048.

Section 4.2 There are several ways you can pay your plan premium

There are three ways you can pay your plan premium. You designated, in your HealthPartners® Freedom (Cost) enrollment form, which of the three options you chose. If you wish to change your method of payment, please call Member Services at the number on the back cover of this booklet.

If you decide to change the way you pay your premium, it can take up to three months for your new payment method to take effect. While we are processing your request for a new payment method, you are responsible for making sure that your plan premium is paid on time.

Option 1: You can pay by check

You may decide to pay your monthly plan premium directly to our plan. You may pay with a check made payable to us, not CMS or HHS, on a monthly or quarterly basis. The premium for each month or quarter, as designated in your enrollment form, is due on the first day of the month or quarter. You will be billed for each premium payment before it is due. We only have to bill you once to tell you when the premium is due. You have a 60-day grace period for making premium payments. The 60-day grace period begins on the premium due date. If you fail to pay the premium when due, we will notify you that you will be disenrolled if payment is not made by the end of the grace period. If you do not pay the premium, you will be terminated on the first day of the month following the 60-day grace period.

To pay by mail, send your check to:

HealthPartners – Seniors
CB 0106
P.O. Box 9148
Minneapolis, MN 55480-9148

To drop off your check in person, bring it to:

HealthPartners
Member Services
8170 33rd Avenue South
Bloomington, MN 55425

Option 2: You can pay by automatic withdrawal from your bank account

Instead of paying by check, you can have your monthly plan premium automatically withdrawn from your bank account on a monthly basis. The deduction will be made on the fifth day of the month. If the fifth falls on a weekend or bank holiday, the withdrawal is made on the next business day. If you are interested in this method of paying your monthly plan premium, please call Member Services at the number on the back cover of this booklet, and they will send you the form necessary for set up on automatic withdrawal.

Option 3: You can have the plan premium taken out of your monthly Social Security check

You can have the plan premium taken out of your monthly Social Security check. Contact Member Services for more information on how to pay your plan premium this way. We will be happy to help you set this up.

What to do if you are having trouble paying your plan premium

Your plan premium is due in our office by the first day of the month. If we have not received your premium payment by the first day of the month, we will send you a notice telling you that your plan membership will end if we do not receive your premium within 60 days. If you do not pay the premium, you will be terminated on the first day of the month following the 60-day grace period.

If you are having trouble paying your plan premium on time, please contact Member Services to see if we can direct you to programs that will help with your plan premium.

If we end your membership because you did not pay your premiums, you will have coverage under Original Medicare. At the time we end your membership, you may still owe us for premiums you have not paid. We have the right to pursue collection of these premiums. In the future, if you want to enroll again in our plan (or another plan that we offer), you will need to pay the late premiums before you can enroll.

If you think we have wrongfully ended your membership, you have a right to appeal our decision. For information about how to appeal the termination of coverage, call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227), 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.

Section 4.3	Can we change your monthly plan premium during the year?
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No. We are not allowed to change the amount we charge for the plan's monthly plan premium during the year. If the monthly plan premium changes for next year we will tell you in September and the change will take effect on January 1.

SECTION 5

Please keep your plan membership record up to date

Section 5.1	How to help make sure that we have accurate information about you
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Your membership record has information from your enrollment form, including your address and telephone number. It shows your specific plan coverage.

The doctors, hospitals, and other providers in the plan's network need to have correct information about you. **These network providers use your membership record to know what services are covered for you.** Because of this, it is very important that you help us keep your information up to date.

Let us know about these changes:

- Changes to your name, your address, or your phone number
- Changes in any other health insurance coverage you have (such as from your employer, your spouse's employer, workers' compensation, or Medicaid)
- If you have any liability claims, such as claims from an automobile accident
- If you have been admitted to a nursing home
- If your designated responsible party (such as a caregiver) changes
- If you are participating in a clinical research study

If any of this information changes, please let us know by calling Member Services (phone numbers are on the back cover of this booklet).

Read over the information we send you about any other insurance coverage you have

Medicare requires that we collect information from you about any other medical or drug insurance coverage that you have. That's because we must coordinate any other coverage you have with your benefits under our plan. (For more information about how our coverage works when you have other insurance, see Section 7 in this chapter.)

Once each year, we will send you a letter that lists any other medical insurance coverage that we know about. Please read over this information carefully. If it is correct, you don't need to do anything. If the information is incorrect, or if you have other coverage that is not listed, please call Member Services (phone numbers are on the back cover of this booklet).

SECTION 6 We protect the privacy of your personal health information

Section 6.1 We make sure that your health information is protected

Federal and state laws protect the privacy of your medical records and personal health information. We protect your personal health information as required by these laws.

For more information about how we protect your personal health information, please go to Chapter 6, Section 1.4 of this booklet.

SECTION 7 How other insurance works with our plan

Section 7.1 Which plan pays first when you have other insurance?

When you have other insurance (like employer group health coverage), there are rules set by Medicare that decide whether our plan or your other insurance pays first. The insurance that pays first is called the "primary payer" and pays up to the limits of its coverage. The one that pays second, called the

“secondary payer,” only pays if there are costs left uncovered by the primary coverage. The secondary payer may not pay all of the uncovered costs.

These rules apply for employer or union group health plan coverage:

- If you have retiree coverage, Medicare pays first.
- If your group health plan coverage is based on your or a family member’s current employment, who pays first depends on your age, the size of the employer, and whether you have Medicare based on age, disability, or End-stage Renal Disease (ESRD):
 - If you’re under 65 and disabled and you or your family member is still working, your plan pays first if the employer has 100 or more employees or at least one employer in a multiple employer plan has more than 100 employees.
 - If you’re over 65 and you or your spouse is still working, the plan pays first if the employer has 20 or more employees or at least one employer in a multiple employer plan has more than 20 employees.
- If you have Medicare because of ESRD, your group health plan will pay first for the first 30 months after you become eligible for Medicare.

These types of coverage usually pay first for services related to each type:

- No-fault insurance (including automobile insurance)
- Liability (including automobile insurance)
- Black lung benefits
- Workers’ compensation

Medicaid and TRICARE never pay first for Medicare-covered services. They only pay after Medicare, employer group health plans, and/or Medigap have paid.

If you have other insurance, tell your doctor, hospital, and pharmacy. If you have questions about who pays first, or you need to update your other insurance information, call Member Services (phone numbers are on the back cover of this booklet.) You may need to give your plan member ID number to your other insurers (once you have confirmed their identity) so your bills are paid correctly and on time.

Chapter 2. Important phone numbers and resources

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SECTION 1 HealthPartners Freedom Vital contacts (how to contact us, including how to reach Member Services at the plan)

How to contact our plan's Member Services

For assistance with claims, billing or member card questions, please call or write to our plan's Member Services. We will be happy to help you.

Member Services

CALL

Local: 952-883-7979
Outside the metro area: 1-800-233-9645

Calls to this number are free.

From October 15, 2011, through February 14, 2012, you may call from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., **seven days a week** to speak with a representative.

Starting on February 15, 2012, you may call from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. **Monday through Friday** to speak with a representative. On Saturdays, Sundays and holidays, you may leave a voice mail, which will be returned within one business day.

Member Services also has free language interpreter services available for non-English speakers.

TTY	<p>Local: 952-883-6060 Outside the metro area: 1-800-443-0156</p> <p>This number requires special telephone equipment and is only for people who have difficulties with hearing or speaking.</p> <p>Calls to this number are free.</p> <p>From October 15, 2011, through February 14, 2012, you may call from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., seven days a week to speak with a representative.</p> <p>Starting on February 15, 2012, you may call from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Friday to speak with a representative. On Saturdays, Sundays and holidays, you may leave a voice mail, which will be returned within one business day.</p>
FAX	952-883-7333
WRITE	HealthPartners Member Services P.O. Box 9463 Minneapolis, MN 55440-9463
WEBSITE	healthpartners.com/medicare

How to contact us when you are asking for a coverage decision about your medical care

A coverage decision is a decision we make about your benefits and coverage or about the amount we will pay for your medical services. For more information on asking for coverage decisions about your medical care, see Chapter 7 (*What to do if you have a problem or complaint (coverage decisions, appeals, complaints)*).

You may call us if you have questions about our coverage decision process.

Coverage Decisions for Medical Care

CALL

Local: 952-883-7979
Outside the metro area: 1-800-233-9645
For expedited organizations determinations: 1-888-525-2125

Calls to this number are free.

From October 15, 2011, through February 14, 2012, you may call Member Services from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., **seven days a week** to speak with a representative.

Starting on February 15, 2012, you may call from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. **Monday through Friday** to speak with a representative. On Saturdays, Sundays and holidays, you may leave a voice mail, which will be returned within one business day.

TTY

Local: 952-883-6060
Outside the metro area: 1-800-443-0156

This number requires special telephone equipment and is only for people who have difficulties with hearing or speaking.

Calls to this number are free.

From October 15, 2011, through February 14, 2012, you may call Member Services from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., **seven days a week** to speak with a representative.

Starting on February 15, 2012, you may call from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. **Monday through Friday** to speak with a representative. On Saturdays, Sundays and holidays, you may leave a voice mail, which will be returned within one business day.

FAX	For expedited organization determinations: 952-883-7333
WRITE	HealthPartners Member Services P.O. Box 9463 Minneapolis, MN 55440-9463 Or deliver a written request to: HealthPartners Member Services 8170 33 rd Avenue South Bloomington, MN 55425

How to contact us when you are making an appeal about your medical care

An appeal is a formal way of asking us to review and change a coverage decision we have made. For more information on making an appeal about your medical care, see Chapter 7 (*What to do if you have a problem or complaint (coverage decisions, appeals, complaints)*).

Appeals for Medical Care	
CALL	Local: 952-883-7979 Outside the metro area: 1-800-233-9645 For expedited appeals: 1-888-525-2125 Calls to this number are free. From October 15, 2011, through February 14, 2012, you may call Member Services from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., seven days a week to speak with a representative. Starting on February 15, 2012, you may call from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Friday to speak with a representative. On Saturdays, Sundays and holidays, you may leave a voice mail, which will be returned within one business day.

TTY	<p>Local: 952-883-6060 Outside the metro area: 1-800-443-0156</p> <p>This number requires special telephone equipment and is only for people who have difficulties with hearing or speaking.</p> <p>Calls to this number are free.</p> <p>From October 15, 2011, through February 14, 2012, you may call Member Services from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., seven days a week to speak with a representative.</p> <p>Starting on February 15, 2012, you may call from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Friday to speak with a representative. On Saturdays, Sundays and holidays, you may leave a voice mail, which will be returned within one business day.</p>
FAX	<p>For expedited appeals: 952-853-8742</p>
WRITE	<p>HealthPartners Member Services P.O. Box 9463 Minneapolis, MN 55440-9463</p> <p>Or deliver your written appeal to:</p> <p>HealthPartners Member Services 8170 33rd Avenue South Bloomington, MN 55425</p>

How to contact us when you are making a complaint about your medical care

You can make a complaint about us or one of our network providers, including a complaint about the quality of your care. This type of complaint does not involve coverage or payment disputes. (If your problem is about the plan's coverage or payment, you should look at the section above about making an appeal.) For more information on making a complaint about your medical care, see Chapter 7 (*What to do if you have a problem or complaint (coverage decisions, appeals, complaints)*).

Complaints about Medical Care

CALL

Local: 952-883-7979
Outside the metro area: 1-800-233-9645

Calls to this number are free.

From October 15, 2011, through February 14, 2012, you may call Member Services from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., **seven days a week** to speak with a representative.

Starting on February 15, 2012, you may call from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. **Monday through Friday** to speak with a representative. On Saturdays, Sundays and holidays, you may leave a voice mail, which will be returned within one business day.

TTY

Local: 952-883-6060
Outside the metro area: 1-800-443-0156

This number requires special telephone equipment and is only for people who have difficulties with hearing or speaking.

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From October 15, 2011, through February 14, 2012, you may call Member Services from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., **seven days a week** to speak with a representative.

Starting on February 15, 2012, you may call from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. **Monday through Friday** to speak with a representative. On Saturdays, Sundays and holidays, you may leave a voice mail, which will be returned within one business day.

FAX	For expedited grievances: 952-853-8742
WRITE	HealthPartners Member Services P.O. Box 9463 Minneapolis, MN 55440-9463 Or deliver your written grievance to: HealthPartners Member Services 8170 33 rd Avenue South Bloomington, MN 55425

Where to send a request asking us to pay for our share of the cost for medical care you have received

For more information on situations in which you may need to ask us for reimbursement or to pay a bill you have received from a provider, see Chapter 5 (*Asking us to pay our share of a bill you have received for covered medical services*).

Please note: If you send us a payment request and we deny any part of your request, you can appeal our decision. See Chapter 7 (*What to do if you have a problem or complaint (coverage decisions, appeals, complaints)*) for more information.

HealthPartners Freedom Vital Payment Requests

CALL Local: 952-883-7979
Outside the metro area: 1-800-233-9645

From October 15, 2011, through February 14, 2012, you may call Member Services from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., **seven days a week** to speak with a representative.

Starting on February 15, 2012, you may call from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. **Monday through Friday** to speak with a representative. On Saturdays, Sundays and holidays, you may leave a voicemail, which will be returned within one business day.

Calls to this number are free.

TTY	<p>Local: 952-883-6060 Outside the metro area: 1-800-443-0156</p> <p>From October 15, 2011, through February 14, 2012, you may call Member Services from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., seven days a week to speak with a representative.</p> <p>Starting on February 15, 2012, you may call from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Friday to speak with a representative. On Saturdays, Sundays and holidays, you may leave a voicemail, which will be returned within one business day.</p> <p>This number requires special telephone equipment and is only for people who have difficulties with hearing or speaking.</p> <p>Calls to this number are free.</p>
FAX	952-883-7333
WRITE	HealthPartners P.O. Box 1289 Minneapolis, MN 55440-1289
WEBSITE	healthpartners.com/medicare

SECTION 2 Medicare (how to get help and information directly from the Federal Medicare program)

Medicare is the Federal health insurance program for people 65 years of age or older, some people under age 65 with disabilities, and people with End-Stage Renal Disease (permanent kidney failure requiring dialysis or a kidney transplant).

The Federal agency in charge of Medicare is the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (sometimes called “CMS”). This agency contracts with Medicare Advantage and Medicare Cost Plan organizations including us.

Medicare	
CALL	1-800-MEDICARE, or 1-800-633-4227 Calls to this number are free. 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
TTY	1-877-486-2048 This number requires special telephone equipment and is only for people who have difficulties with hearing or speaking. Calls to this number are free.

WEBSITE <http://www.medicare.gov>

This is the official government website for Medicare. It gives you up-to-date information about Medicare and current Medicare issues. It also has information about hospitals, nursing homes, physicians, home health agencies, and dialysis facilities. It includes booklets you can print directly from your computer. You can also find Medicare contacts in your state by selecting “Help and Support” and then clicking on “Useful Phone Numbers and Websites.”

The Medicare website also has detailed information about your Medicare eligibility and enrollment options with the following tools:

- **Medicare Eligibility Tool:** Provides Medicare eligibility status information. Select “Find Out if You’re Eligible.”
- **Medicare Plan Finder:** Provides personalized information about available Medicare prescription drug plans, Medicare health plans, and Medigap (Medicare Supplement Insurance) policies in your area. Select “Health & Drug Plans” and then “Compare Drug and Health Plans” or “Compare Medigap Policies.” These tools provide an *estimate* of what your out-of-pocket costs might be in different Medicare plans.

If you don’t have a computer, your local library or senior center may be able to help you visit this website using its computer. Or, you can call Medicare at the number above and tell them what information you are looking for. They will find the information on the website, print it out, and send it to you.

SECTION 3 State Health Insurance Assistance Program (free help, information, and answers to your questions about Medicare)

The State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) is a government program with trained counselors in every state. In Minnesota, the SHIP is called the Senior LinkAge Line®.

The Senior LinkAge Line® is independent (not connected with any insurance company or health plan). It is a state program that gets money from the Federal government to give free local health insurance counseling to people with Medicare.

The Senior LinkAge Line® counselors can help you with your Medicare questions or problems. They can help you understand your Medicare rights, help you make complaints about your medical care or treatment, and help you straighten out problems with your Medicare bills. The Senior LinkAge Line® counselors can also help you understand your Medicare plan choices and answer questions about switching plans.

The Senior LinkAge Line® (Minnesota's SHIP)	
CALL	1-800-333-2433
TTY	1-800-627-3529 This number requires special telephone equipment and is only for people who have difficulties with hearing or speaking.
WRITE	Minnesota Board on Aging 540 Cedar Street St. Paul, MN 55155
WEBSITE	www.mnaging.org www.minnesotahelp.info

SECTION 4 Quality Improvement Organization (paid by Medicare to check on the quality of care for people with Medicare)

There is a Quality Improvement Organization for each state. For Minnesota, the Quality Improvement Organization is called Stratis Health.

Stratis Health has a group of doctors and other health care professionals who are paid by the Federal government. This organization is paid by Medicare to check on and help improve the quality of care for people with Medicare. Stratis Health is an independent organization. It is not connected with our plan.

You should contact Stratis Health in any of these situations:

- You have a complaint about the quality of care you have received.
- You think coverage for your hospital stay is ending too soon.
- You think coverage for your home health care, skilled nursing facility care, or Comprehensive Outpatient Rehabilitation Facility (CORF) services are ending too soon.

Stratis Health (Minnesota's Quality Improvement Organization)	
CALL	952-854-3306 or 1-800-444-3423
TTY	1-800-627-3529 This number requires special telephone equipment and is only for people who have difficulties with hearing or speaking.
WRITE	Stratis Health Metro Office Park, Suite 400 2901 Metro Drive Bloomington, MN 55425-1525
WEBSITE	www.stratishealth.org

SECTION 5 Social Security

The Social Security Administration is responsible for determining eligibility and handling enrollment for Medicare. U.S. citizens who are 65 or older, or who have a disability or End-Stage Renal Disease and meet certain conditions, are eligible for Medicare. If you are already getting Social Security checks, enrollment into Medicare is automatic. If you are not getting Social Security checks, you have to enroll in Medicare. Social Security handles the enrollment process for Medicare. To apply for Medicare, you can call Social Security or visit your local Social Security office.

Social Security Administration

CALL

1-800-772-1213

Calls to this number are free.

Available 7:00 am to 7:00 pm, Monday through Friday.

You can use Social Security's automated telephone services to get recorded information and conduct some business 24 hours a day.

TTY

1-800-325-0778

This number requires special telephone equipment and is only for people who have difficulties with hearing or speaking.

Calls to this number are free.

Available 7:00 am to 7:00 pm, Monday through Friday.

WEBSITE

<http://www.ssa.gov>

SECTION 6 Medicaid (a joint Federal and state program that helps with medical costs for some people with limited income and resources)

Medicaid is a joint Federal and state government program that helps with medical costs for certain people with limited incomes and resources. Some people with Medicare are also eligible for Medicaid.

In addition, there are programs offered through Medicaid that help people with Medicare pay their Medicare costs, such as their Medicare premiums. These programs help people with limited income and resources save money each year:

- **Qualified Medicare Beneficiary (QMB):** Helps pay Medicare Part A and Part B premiums, and other cost sharing (like deductibles, coinsurance, and copayments).
- **Specified Low-Income Medicare Beneficiary (SLMB) and Qualifying Individual (QI):** Helps pay Part B premiums.
- **Qualified Disabled & Working Individuals (QDWI):** Helps pay Part A premiums.

To find out more about Medicaid and its programs, contact the Minnesota Department of Human Services.

Minnesota Department of Human Services	
CALL	651-431-2670 or 1-800-657-3739
TTY	1-800-627-3529 This number requires special telephone equipment and is only for people who have difficulties with hearing or speaking.
WRITE	Minnesota Department of Human Services 444 Lafayette Road North St. Paul, MN 55155
WEBSITE	www.dhs.state.mn.us

SECTION 7 How to contact the Railroad Retirement Board

The Railroad Retirement Board is an independent Federal agency that administers comprehensive benefit programs for the nation’s railroad workers and their families. If you have questions regarding your benefits from the Railroad Retirement Board, contact the agency.

Railroad Retirement Board	
CALL	1-877-772-5772 Calls to this number are free. Available 9:00 am to 3:30 pm, Monday through Friday If you have a touch-tone telephone, recorded information and automated services are available 24 hours a day, including weekends and holidays.
TTY	1-312-751-4701 This number requires special telephone equipment and is only for people who have difficulties with hearing or speaking. Calls to this number are <i>not</i> free.
WEBSITE	http://www.rrb.gov

SECTION 8 Do you have “group insurance” or other health insurance from an employer?

If you (or your spouse) get benefits from your (or your spouse’s) employer or retiree group, call the employer/union benefits administrator or Member Services if you have any questions. You can ask about your (or your spouse’s) employer or retiree health benefits, premiums, or the enrollment period.

Chapter 3. Using the plan's coverage for your medical services

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SECTION 1 Things to know about getting your medical care covered as a member of our plan

This chapter tells things you need to know about using the plan to get your medical care covered. It gives definitions of terms and explains the rules you will need to follow to get the medical treatments, services, and other medical care that are covered by the plan.

For the details on what medical care is covered by our plan and how much you pay as your share of the cost when you get this care, use the benefits chart in the next chapter, Chapter 4 (*Medical Benefits Chart, what is covered and what you pay*).

Section 1.1 What are “network providers” and “covered services”?
--

Here are some definitions that can help you understand how you get the care and services that are covered for you as a member of our plan:

- **“Providers”** are doctors and other health care professionals licensed by the state to provide medical services and care. The term “providers” also includes hospitals and other health care facilities.
- **“Network providers”** are the doctors and other health care professionals, medical groups, hospitals, and other health care facilities that have an agreement with us to accept our payment and your cost-sharing amount as payment in full. We have arranged for these providers to deliver covered services to members in our plan.
- **“Covered services”** include all the medical care, health care services, supplies, and equipment that are covered by our plan. Your covered services for medical care are listed in the benefits chart in Chapter 4.

Section 1.2 Basic rules for getting your medical care covered by the plan

As a Medicare health plan, our plan must cover all services covered by Original Medicare and must follow Original Medicare's coverage rules.

Our plan will generally cover your medical care as long as:

- **The care you receive is included in the plan's Medical Benefits Chart** (this chart is in Chapter 4 of this booklet).
- **The care you receive is considered medically necessary.** “Medically necessary” means that the services, supplies, or drugs are needed for the prevention, diagnosis, or treatment of your medical condition and meet accepted standards of medical practice.

- **You generally must receive your care from a network provider** for our plan to cover the services.
 - If we do not cover services you receive from an out-of-network provider, the services will be covered by Original Medicare if they are Medicare-covered services. Except for emergency or urgently needed care, if you get services covered by Original Medicare from an out-of-network provider then you must pay Original Medicare's cost-sharing amounts. For information on Original Medicare's cost-sharing amounts, call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227), 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.
 - If you get covered supplemental benefits, such as routine hearing exams, from an out-of-network provider then you must pay the entire cost of the service.
 - If an out-of-network provider sends you a bill that you think we should pay, please contact Member Services. Generally, it is best to ask an out-of-network provider to bill Original Medicare first, and then to bill us for the remaining amount. We may require the out-of-network provider to bill Original Medicare. We will then pay any applicable Medicare coinsurance and deductibles minus your copayments on your behalf.
- **You should have a network primary care provider (a PCP) who is providing and overseeing your care.** As a member of our plan, we recommend that you choose a network PCP (for more about this, see Section 2.1 in this chapter).

SECTION 2 Use providers in the plan's network to get your medical care

Section 2.1 You may choose a Primary Care Provider (PCP) to provide and oversee your medical care

What is a "PCP" and what does the PCP do for you?

When you become a member of our plan, we recommend that you choose a plan provider to be your PCP. Your PCP is a physician, nurse practitioner or physician's assistant who meets state requirements and is trained to give you basic medical care. You will get your routine or basic care from your PCP. Your PCP will also coordinate the rest of the covered services you get as a member of our plan. Your PCP will provide most of your care and will help you arrange or coordinate the rest of the covered services you get as a member of our plan. This includes:

- your x-rays
- laboratory tests
- therapies
- care from doctors who are specialists

- hospital admissions, and
- follow-up care.

“Coordinating” your services includes checking or consulting with other plan providers about your care and how it is going. In some cases, your PCP will need to get prior authorization (prior approval) from us. Since your PCP will provide and coordinate your medical care, you should have all of your past medical records sent to your PCP’s office. Chapter 6 tells you how we will protect the privacy of your medical records and personal health information.

Even though our plan has network providers, you may get services from out-of-network providers. If you do get services out-of-network, you pay the cost-sharing amounts under Original Medicare.

How do you choose your PCP?

You can choose a PCP by using the Provider Directory or getting help from Member Services. You do not need to communicate to us which PCP you choose. However, you need to arrange for your medical records to be sent to your PCP’s office. If there is a particular hospital that you want to use, check first to be sure your PCP uses that hospital. You can use any plan specialist, regardless of which PCP you choose.

Changing your PCP

You may change your PCP for any reason, at any time. Also, it’s possible that your PCP might leave our plan’s network of providers and you would have to find a new PCP.

You can change your PCP by using the Provider Directory to find a new PCP. You should check to be sure the PCP you want to switch to is accepting new patients. If you need help, call Member Services. The change to your new PCP will take effect right away.

Section 2.2	How to get care from specialists and other network providers
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A specialist is a doctor who provides health care services for a specific disease or part of the body. There are many kinds of specialists. Here are a few examples:

- Oncologists, who care for patients with cancer.
- Cardiologists, who care for patients with heart conditions.
- Orthopedists, who care for patients with certain bone, joint, or muscle conditions.

You do not need a referral to see a network specialist. For some types of services provided by network specialists, you may need to ask your PCP or the specialist to get approval in advance from us (this is called getting “prior authorization”). You may call our Member Services or check our website at healthpartners.com/medicare for a list of services which require authorization.

You can use any network specialist, regardless of which PCP you choose. If there are specific hospitals you want to use, find out whether your PCP uses these hospitals.

Remember, you may get care from out-of-network providers without a referral (approval in advance). However, if you use out-of-network providers for care that isn't emergency care or urgently needed care, or if you use out-of-network providers for care and have not activated the Extended Absence Benefit, you will have to pay the Original Medicare Plan cost sharing.

What if a specialist or another network provider leaves our plan?

Sometimes a specialist, clinic, hospital or other network provider you are using might leave the plan.

If a specialist or another provider leaves our plan and you have used the provider within the last six months that he or she is part of our network, we will notify you. We will send you a letter as soon as we learn that the provider is leaving or has left our plan.

If your provider leaves our plan, you will have to switch to another provider who is part of our plan. You may use the Provider Directory or look on our website (healthpartners.com/medicare) to find a new provider. If you need help, Member Services can assist you in finding and selecting another provider.

In some cases, when your provider leaves our plan, you may have the right to continue receiving services from that provider for a period of time. See Chapter 9, Section 6, "Continuity of care."

SECTION 3 How to get covered services when you have an emergency or urgent need for care

Section 3.1 Getting care if you have a medical emergency
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What is a "medical emergency" and what should you do if you have one?

A "medical emergency" is when you, or any other prudent layperson with an average knowledge of health and medicine, believe that you have medical symptoms that require immediate medical attention to prevent loss of life, loss of a limb, or loss of function of a limb. The medical symptoms may be an illness, injury, severe pain, or a medical condition that is quickly getting worse.

If you have a medical emergency:

- **Get help as quickly as possible.** Call 911 for help or go to the nearest emergency room, hospital, or urgent care center. Call for an ambulance if you need it. You do *not* need to get approval or a referral first from your PCP.

- **As soon as possible, make sure that your PCP has been told about your emergency.** Your PCP needs to follow up on your emergency care. You or someone else should call to tell your PCP about your emergency care, usually within 48 hours. Call your PCP or call our plan's CareLineSM service nurse at 612-339-3663 in the Minneapolis/St. Paul metro area or 1-800-551-0859 outside the metro area, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

If you are admitted to an out-of-network hospital, call our plan's CareCheck[®] at 952-883-5800 in the Minneapolis/ St. Paul metro area or 1-800-942-4872 outside the metro area as soon as reasonably possible. You may call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

What is covered if you have a medical emergency?

You may get covered emergency medical care whenever you need it, anywhere in the United States or its territories. Our plan covers ambulance services in situations where getting to the emergency room in any other way could endanger your health. For more information, see the Medical Benefits Chart in Chapter 4 of this booklet.

You also may get covered emergency medical care whenever you need it, outside the United States, anywhere in the world. No extra premium is charged for this benefit. See the Medical Benefits Chart in Chapter 4 for more detailed information. Ambulance services also are covered in situations where other means of transportation outside the United States, anywhere in the world, would endanger your health. No extra premium is charged for this benefit. See the Medical Benefits Chart in Chapter 4 for more detailed information.

If you have an emergency, we will talk with the doctors who are giving you emergency care to help manage and follow up on your care. The doctors who are giving you emergency care will decide when your condition is stable and the medical emergency is over.

After the emergency is over you are entitled to follow-up care to be sure your condition continues to be stable. Your follow-up care will be covered by our plan. If your emergency care is provided by out-of-network providers, we will try to arrange for network providers to take over your care as soon as your medical condition and the circumstances allow.

What if it wasn't a medical emergency?

Sometimes it can be hard to know if you have a medical emergency. For example, you might go in for emergency care – thinking that your health is in serious danger – and the doctor may say that it wasn't a medical emergency after all. If it turns out that it was not an emergency, as long as you reasonably thought your health was in serious danger, we will cover your care.

However, after the doctor has said that it was *not* an emergency, we will cover additional care *only* if you go to a network provider to get the additional care. If you get additional care from an **out-of-network** provider after the doctor says it was not an emergency, you will normally have to pay Original Medicare's cost sharing.

Section 3.2	Getting care when you have an urgent need for care
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What is “urgently needed care”?

“Urgently needed care” is a non-emergency, unforeseen medical illness, injury, or condition, that requires immediate medical care, but the plan’s network of providers is temporarily unavailable or inaccessible. The unforeseen condition could, for example, be an unforeseen flare-up of a known condition that you have (for example, a flare-up of a chronic skin condition).

What if you are in the plan’s service area when you have an urgent need for care?

In most other situations, if you are in the plan’s service area, we will cover urgently needed care *only* if you get this care from a network provider and follow the other rules described earlier in this chapter. However, if the circumstances are unusual or extraordinary, and network providers are temporarily unavailable or inaccessible, we will cover urgently needed care that you get from an out-of-network provider.

What if you are outside the plan’s service area when you have an urgent need for care?

When you are outside the service area and cannot get care from a network provider, our plan will cover urgently needed care that you get from any provider.

You also may get covered urgently needed care whenever you need it, outside the United States, anywhere in the world. No extra premium is charged for this benefit. See the Medical Benefits Chart in Chapter 4 for more information.

SECTION 4	What if you are billed directly for the full cost of your covered services?
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Section 4.1	You can ask the plan to pay our share of the cost of your covered services
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If you have paid more than your share for covered services, or if you have received a bill for the full cost of covered medical services, go to Chapter 5 (*Asking us to pay our share of a bill you have received for covered medical services*) for information about what to do.

Section 4.2	If services are not covered by our plan or Original Medicare, you must pay the full cost
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Our plan covers all medical services that are medically necessary, are listed in the plan's Medical Benefits Chart (this chart is in Chapter 4 of this booklet), and are obtained consistent with plan rules. You are responsible for paying the full cost of services that aren't covered by Original Medicare or our plan, either because they are not plan covered services, or they were obtained out-of-network where not authorized. You also have the right to seek care from any provider that is qualified to treat Medicare members. However, Original Medicare pays your claims and you must pay your cost sharing.

If you have any questions about whether we will pay for any medical service or care that you are considering, you have the right to ask us whether we will cover it before you get it. If we say we will not cover your services, you have the right to appeal our decision not to cover your care.

Chapter 7 (*What to do if you have a problem or complaint (coverage decisions, appeals, complaints)*) has more information about what to do if you want a coverage decision from us or want to appeal a decision we have already made. You may also call Member Services at the number on the back cover of this booklet to get more information about how to do this.

For covered services that have a benefit limitation, you pay the full cost of any services you get after you have used up your benefit for that type of covered service, unless the plan offers, as a covered supplemental benefit, coverage beyond Original Medicare's limits. Once a benefit limit has been reached, your cost for those services will not apply toward the out-of-pocket maximum. You can call Member Services when you want to know how much of your benefit limit you have already used.

SECTION 5	How are your medical services covered when you are in a "clinical research study"?
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Section 5.1	What is a "clinical research study"?
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A clinical research study is a way that doctors and scientists test new types of medical care, like how well a new cancer drug works. They test new medical care procedures or drugs by asking for volunteers to help with the study. This kind of study is one of the final stages of a research process that helps doctors and scientists see if a new approach works and if it is safe.

Not all clinical research studies are open to members of our plan. Medicare first needs to approve the research study. If you participate in a study that Medicare has *not* approved, *you will be responsible for paying all costs for your participation in the study.*

Once Medicare approves the study, someone who works on the study will contact you to explain more about the study and see if you meet the requirements set by the scientists who are running the study. You can participate in the study as long as you meet the requirements for the study *and* you have a full understanding and acceptance of what is involved if you participate in the study.

If you participate in a Medicare-approved study, Original Medicare pays most of the costs for the covered services you receive as part of the study. When you are in a clinical research study, you may stay enrolled in our plan and continue to get the rest of your care (the care that is not related to the study) through our plan.

If you want to participate in a Medicare-approved clinical research study, you do *not* need to get approval from us or your PCP. The providers that deliver your care as part of the clinical research study do *not* need to be part of our plan's network of providers.

Although you do not need to get our permission to be in a clinical research study, **you do need to tell us before you start participating in a clinical research study.** Here is why you need to tell us:

1. We can let you know whether the clinical research study is Medicare-approved.
2. We can tell you what services you will get from clinical research study providers instead of from our plan.

If you plan on participating in a clinical research study, contact Member Services (see Chapter 2, Section 1 of this *Evidence of Coverage*).

Section 5.2	When you participate in a clinical research study, who pays for what?
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Once you join a Medicare-approved clinical research study, you are covered for routine items and services you receive as part of the study, including:

- Room and board for a hospital stay that Medicare would pay for even if you weren't in a study.
- An operation or other medical procedure if it is part of the research study.
- Treatment of side effects and complications of the new care.

Original Medicare pays most of the cost of the covered services you receive as part of the study. After Medicare has paid its share of the cost for these services, our plan will also pay for part of the costs:

- We will pay the difference between the cost sharing in Original Medicare and your cost sharing as a member of our plan. This means you will pay the same amount for the services you receive as part of the study as you would if you received these services from our plan.
 - *Here's an example of how the cost sharing works:* Let's say that you have a lab test that costs \$100 as part of the research study. Let's also say that your share of the costs for this test is \$20 under Original Medicare, but would be only \$10 under our plan's benefits. In this case, Original Medicare would pay \$80 for the test and we would pay another \$10. This means that you would pay \$10, which is the same amount you would pay under our plan's benefits.
- We will pay the Medicare Part A or Part B deductible.
- In order for us to pay for our share of the costs, you will need to submit a request for payment. With your request, you will need to send us a copy of your Medicare Summary Notices or other documentation that shows what services you received as part of the study and how much you owe. Please see Chapter 5 for more information about submitting requests for payment.

When you are part of a clinical research study, **neither Medicare nor our plan will pay for any of the following:**

- Generally, Medicare will *not* pay for the new item or service that the study is testing unless Medicare would cover the item or service even if you were *not* in a study.
- Items and services the study gives you or any participant for free.
- Items or services provided only to collect data, and not used in your direct health care. For example, Medicare would not pay for monthly CT scans done as part of the study if your condition would usually require only one CT scan.

Do you want to know more?

You can get more information about joining a clinical research study by reading the publication "Medicare and Clinical Research Studies" on the Medicare website (<http://www.medicare.gov>). You can also call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227), 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.

SECTION 6 Rules for getting care covered in a “religious non-medical health care institution”

Section 6.1	What is a religious non-medical health care institution?
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A religious non-medical health care institution is a facility that provides care for a condition that would ordinarily be treated in a hospital or skilled nursing facility care. If getting care in a hospital or a skilled nursing facility is against a member's religious beliefs, we will instead provide coverage for care in a religious non-medical health care institution. You may choose to pursue medical care at any time for any reason. This benefit is provided only for Part A inpatient services (non-medical health care services). Medicare will only pay for non-medical health care services provided by religious non-medical health care institutions.

Section 6.2	What care from a religious non-medical health care institution is covered by our plan?
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To get care from a religious non-medical health care institution, you must sign a legal document that says you are conscientiously opposed to getting medical treatment that is “non-excepted.”

- “Non-excepted” medical care or treatment is any medical care or treatment that is *voluntary* and *not required* by any federal, state, or local law.
- “Excepted” medical treatment is medical care or treatment that you get that is *not* voluntary or *is required* under federal, state, or local law.

To be covered by our plan, the care you get from a religious non-medical health care institution must meet the following conditions:

- The facility providing the care must be certified by Medicare.
- Our plan's coverage of services you receive is limited to *non-religious* aspects of care.
- If you get services from this institution that are provided to you in your home, our plan will cover these services only if your condition would ordinarily meet the conditions for coverage of services given by home health agencies that are not religious non-medical health care institutions.
- If you get services from this institution that are provided to you in a facility, the following conditions apply:
 - You must have a medical condition that would allow you to receive covered services for inpatient hospital care or skilled nursing facility care.
 - – *and* – you must get approval in advance from our plan before you are admitted to the facility or your stay will not be covered.

There is no limit to the number of days covered by the plan each benefit period.

SECTION 7 Rules for ownership of durable medical equipment

Section 7.1	Will you own your durable medical equipment after making a certain number of payments under our plan?
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Durable medical equipment includes items such as oxygen equipment and supplies, wheelchairs, walkers, and hospital beds ordered by a provider for use in the home. Certain items, such as prosthetics, are always owned by the enrollee. In this section, we discuss other types of durable medical equipment that must be rented.

In Original Medicare, people who rent certain types of durable medical equipment own the equipment after paying co-payments for the item for 13 months. As a member of our plan, however, you usually will not acquire ownership of rented durable medical equipment items no matter how many copayments you make for the item while a member of our plan. Under certain limited circumstances we will transfer ownership of the durable medical equipment item. Call member services (phone numbers are on the back cover of this booklet) to find out about the requirements you must meet and the documentation you need to provide.

What happens to payments you have made for durable medical equipment if you switch to Original Medicare?

If you switch to Original Medicare after being a member of our plan: If you did not acquire ownership of the durable medical equipment item while in our plan, you will have to make 13 new consecutive payments for the item while in Original Medicare in order to acquire ownership of the item. Your previous payments while in our plan do not count toward these new 13 consecutive payments.

If you made payments for the durable medical equipment item under Original Medicare *before* you joined our plan, these previous Original Medicare payments also do not count toward the new 13 consecutive payments. You will have to make 13 new consecutive payments for the item under Original Medicare in order to acquire ownership. There are no exceptions to this case when you return to Original Medicare.

Chapter 4. Medical Benefits Chart (what is covered and what you pay)

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SECTION 1 Understanding your out-of-pocket costs for covered services

This chapter focuses on your covered services and what you pay for your medical benefits. It includes a Medical Benefits Chart that gives a list of your covered services and tells how much you will pay for each covered service as a member of our plan. Later in this chapter, you can find information about medical services that are not covered. It also tells about limitations on certain services. If you signed up and are paying an additional premium for the “Freedom Comprehensive Dental Benefit” under the “Extra ‘optional supplemental’ benefits you can buy,” you will receive an amendment to this EOC describing the benefit, including services covered for you and applicable exclusions.

Section 1.1 Types of out-of-pocket costs you may pay for your covered services
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To understand the payment information we give you in this chapter, you need to know about the types of out-of-pocket costs you may pay for your covered services.

- A **“copayment”** is the fixed amount you pay each time you receive certain medical services. You pay a copayment at the time you get the medical service. (The Medical Benefits Chart in Section 2 tells you more about your copayments.)
- **“Coinsurance”** is the percentage you pay of the total cost of certain medical services. You pay a coinsurance at the time you get the medical service. (The Medical Benefits Chart in Section 2 tells you more about your coinsurance.)

Some people qualify for State Medicaid programs to help them pay their out-of-pocket costs for Medicare. (These “Medicare Savings Programs” include the Qualified Medicare Beneficiary (QMB), Specified Low-Income Medicare Beneficiary (SLMB), Qualifying Individual (QI), and Qualified Disabled & Working Individuals (QDWI) programs.) If you are enrolled in one of these programs, you may still have to pay a copayment for the service, depending on the rules in your state.

Section 1.2 What is the most you will pay for Medicare Part A and Part B covered medical services?
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There is a limit to how much you have to pay out-of-pocket each year for medical services that are covered under Medicare Part A and Part B (see the Medical Benefits Chart in Section 2, below). This limit is called the maximum out-of-pocket amount for medical services.

As a member of our plan, the most you will have to pay out-of-pocket for covered Part A and Part B services in 2012 is \$3,000. The amounts you pay for copayments and coinsurance for covered services count toward this maximum out-of-pocket amount. (The amounts you pay for

your plan premiums do not count toward your maximum out-of-pocket amount.) If you reach the maximum out-of-pocket amount of \$3,000, you will not have to pay any out-of-pocket costs for the rest of the year for covered Part A and Part B services. However, you must continue to pay your plan premium and the Medicare Part B premium (unless your Part B premium is paid for you by Medicaid or another third party).

Section 1.3	Our plan does not allow providers to “balance bill” you
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As a member of our plan, an important protection for you is that, after you meet any deductibles, you only have to pay the plan’s cost-sharing amount when you get services covered by our plan. We do not allow providers to add additional separate charges such as “balance billing.” This protection (that you never pay more than the plan cost-sharing amount) applies even if we pay the provider less than the provider charges for a service and even if there is a dispute and we don’t pay certain provider charges.

Here is how this protection works.

- If your cost sharing is a copayment (a set amount of dollars, for example, \$15.00), then you pay only that amount for any services from a network provider.
- If your cost sharing is a coinsurance (a percentage of the total charges), then you never pay more than that percentage. However, your cost depends on which type of provider you see:
 - If you obtain covered services from a network provider, you pay the coinsurance percentage multiplied by the plan’s reimbursement rate (as determined in the contract between the provider and the plan).
 - If you obtain covered services from an out-of-network provider who participates with Medicare, you pay the coinsurance percentage multiplied by the Medicare payment rate for participating providers. (Remember, the plan covers services from out-of-network providers only in certain situations, such as when you get a referral.)
 - If you obtain covered services from an out-of-network provider who does not participate with Medicare, then you pay the coinsurance amount multiplied by the Medicare payment rate for non-participating providers. (Remember, the plan covers services from out-of-network providers only in certain situations, such as when you get a referral.)

SECTION 2 Use the *Medical Benefits Chart* to find out what is covered for you and how much you will pay

Section 2.1 Your medical benefits and costs as a member of the plan

The Medical Benefits Chart on the following pages lists the services our plan covers and what you pay out-of-pocket for each service. The services listed in the Medical Benefits Chart are covered only when the following coverage requirements are met:

- Your Medicare covered services must be provided according to the coverage guidelines established by Medicare.
- Your services (including medical care, services, supplies, and equipment) *must* be medically necessary. “Medically necessary” means that the services, supplies, or drugs are needed for the prevention, diagnosis, or treatment of your medical condition and meet accepted standards of medical practice.
- You receive your care from a network provider. In most cases, care you receive from an out-of-network provider will not be covered by our plan. Chapter 3 provides more information about requirements for using network providers and the situations when we will cover services from an out-of-network provider.
 - If you get Medicare-covered services from an out-of-network provider and we do not cover the services, Original Medicare will cover the services. For any services covered by Original Medicare instead of our plan, you must pay Original Medicare’s cost-sharing amounts.
- Some of the services listed in the Medical Benefits Chart are covered *only* if your doctor or other network provider gets approval in advance (sometimes called “prior authorization”) from us. Covered services that need approval in advance are marked in the Medical Benefits Chart by an italicized statement that reads, “(*Certain services under this item may require authorization or prior authorization.*)”
- For all preventive services that are covered at no cost under Original Medicare, we also cover the service at no cost to you. However, if you also are treated or monitored for an existing medical condition during the visit when you receive the preventive service, a copayment will apply for the care received for the existing medical condition.

Medical Benefits Chart

Services that are covered for you

What you must pay
when you get these
services

INPATIENT CARE

Inpatient hospital care

Our plan covers an unlimited number of hospital days, when approved by Medicare as medically necessary, or after Medicare coverage ends, when the services are in accordance with Medicare guidelines. However, you must use available days from your Medicare lifetime reserve of 60 days. Covered services include:

- Semi-private room (or a private room if medically necessary)
- Meals including special diets
- Regular nursing services
- Costs of special care units (such as intensive care or coronary care units)
- Drugs and medications
- Lab tests
- X-rays and other radiology services
- Necessary surgical and medical supplies
- Use of appliances, such as wheelchairs
- Operating and recovery room costs
- Physical, occupational, and speech language therapy

\$300 copayment per benefit period. A benefit period begins the day you go into a hospital or skilled nursing facility. The benefit period ends when you haven't received any inpatient hospital care (or skilled care in a SNF) for 60 days in a row. For more information on benefit periods, see the definition of "benefit period" in Chapter 10. After Medicare coverage ends, nothing.

If you get authorized inpatient care at an out-of-network hospital after your emergency condition is stabilized, your cost is the cost-sharing you would pay at a network hospital.

Services that are covered for you	What you must pay when you get these services
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- Inpatient substance abuse services
- Under certain conditions, the following types of transplants are covered: corneal, kidney, kidney-pancreatic, heart, liver, lung, heart/lung, bone marrow, stem cell, and intestinal/multivisceral. If you need a transplant, we will arrange to have your case reviewed by a Medicare-approved transplant center that will decide whether you are a candidate for a transplant. If our plan provides transplant services at a distant location (farther away than the normal community patterns of care) and you choose to obtain transplants at this distant location, we will arrange or pay for appropriate lodging and transportation costs for you and a companion.
- Blood – including storage and administration. Coverage of whole blood and packed red cells begins with the first pint of blood that you need. All other components of blood are covered beginning with the first pint used.
- Physician services

Note: To be an inpatient, your provider must write an order to admit you to the hospital. Even if you stay in the hospital overnight, you might still be considered an “outpatient.” If you are not sure if you are an inpatient, you should ask the hospital staff.

You can also find more information in a Medicare fact sheet called “Are You a Hospital Inpatient or Outpatient? If You Have Medicare – Ask!” This fact sheet is available on the Web at <http://www.medicare.gov/Publications/Pubs/pdf/11435.pdf> or by calling 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). TTY users call 1-877-486-2048. You can call these numbers for free, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Services that are covered for you	What you must pay when you get these services
Inpatient mental health care Covered services include mental health care services that require a hospital stay. Inpatient mental health care must be approved by Medicare. After Medicare coverage ends, services must be in accordance with Medicare guidelines. Inpatient mental health treatment in a Medicare-certified psychiatric hospital is limited to the 190 inpatient days Medicare lifetime maximum. Inpatient mental health services in a hospital or other approved treatment facility are covered for an unlimited number of days. You must use available days from your Medicare lifetime reserve of 60 days.	\$300 copayment per benefit period. A benefit period begins the day you go into a hospital or skilled nursing facility. The benefit period ends when you haven't received any inpatient hospital care (or skilled care in a SNF) for 60 days in a row. For more information on benefit periods, see the definition of "benefit period" in Chapter 10. After Medicare coverage ends, nothing.

Services that are covered for you	What you must pay when you get these services
Skilled nursing facility (SNF) care (<i>Certain services under this item may require authorization or prior authorization.</i>)	Nothing for days 1-20; \$100 per day for days 21-100.
(For a definition of “skilled nursing facility care,” see Chapter 10 of this booklet. Skilled nursing facilities are sometimes called “SNFs.”)	We cover the Medicare coinsurance for Medicare-specified days up to the Medicare limit of 100 days per benefit period.
Skilled nursing facility care is covered if it follows a hospital stay of three or more days. Skilled nursing facility care is limited to 100 days per benefit period. Covered services include:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Semiprivate room (or a private room if medically necessary)• Meals, including special diets• Regular nursing services• Physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech therapy• Drugs administered to you as part of your plan of care (This includes substances that are naturally present in the body, such as blood clotting factors.)• Blood – including storage and administration. Coverage of whole blood and packed red cells begins with the first pint of blood that you need. All other components of blood are covered beginning with the first pint used.• Medical and surgical supplies ordinarily provided by SNFs• Laboratory tests ordinarily provided by SNFs• X-rays and other radiology services ordinarily provided by SNFs• Use of appliances such as wheelchairs ordinarily provided by SNFs• Physician services	

Services that are covered for you

What you must pay
when you get these
services

Inpatient services covered during a non-covered inpatient stay

(Certain services under this item may require authorization or prior authorization.)

Nothing.

If you have exhausted your inpatient benefits or if the inpatient stay is not reasonable and necessary, we will not cover your inpatient stay. However, in some cases, we will cover certain services you receive while you are in the hospital or the skilled nursing facility (SNF) stay. Covered services include, but are not limited to:

- Physician services
 - Diagnostic tests (like lab tests)
 - X-ray, radium, and isotope therapy including technician materials and services
 - Surgical dressings
 - Splints, casts and other devices used to reduce fractures and dislocations
 - Prosthetics and orthotics devices (other than dental) that replace all or part of an internal body organ (including contiguous tissue), or all or part of the function of a permanently inoperative or malfunctioning internal body organ, including replacement or repairs of such devices
 - Leg, arm, back, and neck braces; trusses, and artificial legs, arms, and eyes including adjustments, repairs, and replacements required because of breakage, wear, loss, or a change in the patient's physical condition
 - Physical therapy, speech therapy, and occupational therapy
-

Services that are covered for you	What you must pay when you get these services
<hr/> Home health agency care (<i>Certain services under this item may require authorization or prior authorization.</i>)	
Covered services include:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Part-time or intermittent skilled nursing and home health aide services (To be covered under the home health care benefit, your skilled nursing and home health aide services combined must total fewer than 8 hours per day and 35 hours per week)• Physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech therapy• Medical and social services	We cover no additional home health services or visits beyond what is covered by Medicare. You pay nothing for the Medicare-approved amount for services.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Medical equipment and supplies	We cover the Medicare Part B coinsurance for Medicare-covered TPN/IV therapy, and IVIG for treatment in the home of primary immune deficiency diseases.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Medical equipment and supplies	See “Durable medical equipment and related supplies” benefit.
<hr/> Hospice care	
<p>You may receive care from any Medicare-certified hospice program. Your hospice doctor can be a network provider or an out-of-network provider.</p> <p>Original Medicare (rather than our plan) will pay for your hospice services and any Part A and Part B services related to your terminal condition. While you are in the hospice program, your hospice provider will bill Original Medicare for the services that Original Medicare pays for.</p>	When you enroll in a Medicare-certified hospice program, your hospice services and your Part A and Part B services related to your terminal condition are paid for by Original Medicare, not our plan.
Covered services include:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Drugs for symptom control and pain relief	

Services that are covered for you

What you must pay
when you get these
services

-
- Short-term respite care
 - Home care

You are still a member of our plan. If you need non-hospice care (care that is not related to your terminal condition), you have two options:

- You can obtain your non-hospice care from plan providers. In this case, you only pay plan allowed cost sharing
- --or-- You can get your care covered by Original Medicare. In this case, you must pay the cost-sharing amounts under Original Medicare, except for emergency or urgently needed care. However, after payment, you can ask us to pay you back for the difference between the cost sharing in our plan and the cost sharing under Original Medicare.

Note: If you need non-hospice care (care that is not related to your terminal condition), you should contact us to arrange the services. Getting your non-hospice care through our network providers will lower your share of the costs for the services.

Our plan covers hospice consultation services (one time only) for a terminally ill person who hasn't elected the hospice benefit.

For Primary Care
Providers - \$15
copayment per office
visit.

For Specialists - \$40
copayment per office
visit.

Services that are covered for you

What you must pay
when you get these
services

OUTPATIENT SERVICES

Physician services, including doctor's office visits

Covered services include:

- Medically necessary medical or surgical services furnished in a physician's office, certified ambulatory surgical center, hospital outpatient department, or any other location (*Certain services under this item may require authorization or prior authorization.*)

For Primary Care
Providers - \$15
copayment per visit.

For Specialists - \$40
copayment per office
visit.

*Copayment is waived
when there is a separate
copayment required for
ambulatory surgery
under "Outpatient
hospital services" or
"Outpatient surgery,
including services
provided at hospital
outpatient facilities and
ambulatory surgical
centers."*

- Consultation, diagnosis, and treatment by a specialist
- Basic hearing and balance exams performed by your PCP or specialist, if your doctor orders it to see if you need medical treatment

\$40 copayment per
office visit.

For Primary Care
Providers - \$15
copayment per office
visit.

For Specialists - \$40
copayment per office
visit.

Services that are covered for you	What you must pay when you get these services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telehealth office visits including consultation, diagnosis and treatment by a specialist 	<p>For Primary Care Providers - \$15 copayment per office visit.</p> <p>For Specialists - \$40 copayment per office visit.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second opinion by another network provider prior to surgery 	<p>For Primary Care Providers - \$15 copayment per office visit.</p> <p>For Specialists - \$40 copayment per office visit.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-routine dental care (covered services are limited to surgery of the jaw or related structures, setting fractures of the jaw or facial bones, extraction of teeth to prepare the jaw for radiation treatments of neoplastic cancer disease, or services that would be covered when provided by a physician). See also “Dental services” under “Additional Benefits.” 	<p>Nothing.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medicare Part B injections administered in a physician's office <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allergy injections All other injections 	<p>Nothing.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office visits with a nurse 	<p>\$15 copayment per visit.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convenience clinic visits at walk-in clinics that have a contract with us. Contracted convenience care clinics are designated on our website at healthpartners.com/medicare. You must use a designated convenience care clinic to obtain this convenience care benefit. 	<p>\$15 copayment per visit.</p>

Services that are covered for you	What you must pay when you get these services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to online care through virtuwel™ at www.virtuwel.com. Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, without an appointment. Please see definition of virtuwel™ in Chapter 10 for details. <p><i>Limited to 3 online visits per year.</i></p>	Nothing.
<p>Outpatient hospital services (<i>Certain services under this item may require authorization or prior authorization.</i>)</p> <p>We cover medically-necessary services you get in the outpatient department of a hospital for diagnosis or treatment of an illness or injury.</p> <p>Covered services include:</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services in an emergency department or outpatient clinic, including same-day surgery 	See “Emergency care” and “Outpatient surgery, including services provided at hospital outpatient facilities and ambulatory surgical centers,” below.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laboratory tests billed by the hospital 	Nothing.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental health care, including care in a partial-hospitalization program, if a doctor certifies that inpatient treatment would be required without it 	See “Outpatient mental health care” and “Partial hospitalization services.”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • X-rays and other radiology services billed by the hospital 	Nothing.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical supplies such as splints and casts 	Nothing.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certain screenings and preventive services 	Nothing.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certain drugs and biologicals that you can’t give yourself 	Nothing.

Services that are covered for you	What you must pay when you get these services
<hr/> <p>Note: Unless the provider has written an order to admit you as an inpatient to the hospital, you are an outpatient and pay the cost-sharing amounts for outpatient hospital services. Even if you stay in the hospital overnight, you might still be considered an “outpatient.” If you are not sure if you are an outpatient, you should ask the hospital staff.</p>	
<p>You can also find more information in a Medicare fact sheet called “Are You a Hospital Inpatient or Outpatient? If You Have Medicare – Ask!” This fact sheet is available on the Web at http://www.medicare.gov/Publications/Pubs/pdf/11435.pdf or by calling 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). TTY users call 1-877-486-2048. You can call these numbers for free, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.</p>	
<hr/> Chiropractic services	\$15 copayment per office visit.
Covered services include:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We cover only manual manipulation of the spine to correct subluxation	
<hr/> Podiatry services	\$40 copayment per office visit.
Covered services include:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Treatment of injuries and diseases of the feet (such as hammer toe or heel spurs)• Routine foot care for members with certain medical conditions affecting the lower limbs	
<hr/> Outpatient mental health care	Outpatient services:
Covered services include:	
\$40 copayment per visit.	
Mental health services provided by a doctor, clinical psychologist, clinical social worker, clinical nurse specialist, nurse practitioner, physician assistant, or other Medicare-qualified mental health care professional as allowed under applicable state laws.	
Group therapy: \$20 copayment per visit.	

Services that are covered for you	What you must pay when you get these services
Partial hospitalization services	Nothing.
<p>“Partial hospitalization” is a structured program of active psychiatric treatment provided in a hospital outpatient setting or by a community mental health center, that is more intense than the care received in your doctor’s or therapist’s office and is an alternative to inpatient hospitalization.</p>	
Outpatient substance abuse services	Outpatient services:
	\$40 copayment per session.
	<i>Treatment is typically received in three-hour sessions. One session counts as three hours of treatment. If treatment is rendered on a group basis, two group therapy sessions count as three hours of treatment.</i>
	Partial hospitalization:
	Nothing.
Outpatient surgery, including services provided at hospital outpatient facilities and ambulatory surgical centers (<i>Certain services under this item may require authorization or prior authorization.</i>)	\$150 copayment.
<p>Note: If you are having surgery in a hospital, you should check with your provider about whether you will be an inpatient or outpatient. Unless the provider writes an order to admit you as an inpatient to the hospital, you are an outpatient and pay the cost-sharing amounts for outpatient surgery. Even if you stay in the hospital overnight, you might still be considered an “outpatient.”</p>	

Services that are covered for you	What you must pay when you get these services
Ambulance services	Ambulance services inside the United States.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Covered ambulance services include fixed wing, rotary wing, and ground ambulance services, to the nearest appropriate facility that can provide care only if they are furnished to a member whose medical condition is such that other means of transportation are contraindicated (could endanger the person's health) or if authorized by us. The member's condition must require both the ambulance transportation itself and the level of service provided in order for the billed service to be considered medically necessary.• Non-emergency transportation by ambulance is appropriate if it is documented that the member's condition is such that other means of transportation are contraindicated (could endanger the person's health) and that transportation by ambulance is medically required.	20% coinsurance for one way or round trips.
	Ambulance services outside the United States.
	20% coinsurance for one way or round trips.
Emergency care	Emergency care from network providers.
Emergency care is care that is needed to evaluate or stabilize an emergency medical condition.	Emergency department treatment, including professional services of a physician.
A medical emergency is when you, or any other prudent layperson with an average knowledge of health and medicine, believe that you have medical symptoms that require immediate medical attention to prevent loss of life, loss of a limb, or loss of function of a limb. The medical symptoms may be an illness, injury, severe pain, or a medical condition that is quickly getting worse.	\$75 copayment per visit.
	<i>Emergency department copayment is waived if admitted for the same condition within 24 hours.</i>

Services that are covered for you	What you must pay when you get these services
Inside the United States	Emergency care from out-of-network providers. Emergency department treatment, including professional services of a physician. \$75 copayment per visit. <i>Emergency department copayment is waived if admitted for the same condition within 24 hours.</i>
Outside the United States	20% coinsurance. Inpatient hospital services.
Inside the United States	If you get inpatient care at an out-of-network hospital after an emergency admission, your cost is the cost sharing you would pay at a network hospital. However, if you refuse reasonable, medically appropriate transfer to a network hospital, your cost sharing might be higher.
Outside the United States	20% coinsurance.

Services that are covered for you	What you must pay when you get these services
Urgently needed care	Urgently needed care from network providers.
<p>Urgently needed care is care provided to treat a non-emergency, unforeseen medical illness, injury, or condition, that requires immediate medical care, but the plan’s network of providers is temporarily unavailable or inaccessible.</p>	<p>Urgently needed care at network clinics.</p>
	<p>\$40 copayment per office visit.</p>
	Urgently needed care from non-network providers.
	<p>Professional services of a physician and outpatient hospital services.</p>
<p>Inside the United States</p>	<p>\$40 copayment per visit.</p>
<p>Outside the United States</p>	<p>20% coinsurance.</p>
Outpatient rehabilitation services <i>(Certain services under this item may require authorization or prior authorization.)</i>	\$40 copayment per visit.
<p>Covered services include: physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech language therapy.</p>	
<p>Outpatient rehabilitation services are provided in various outpatient settings, such as hospital outpatient departments, independent therapist offices, and Comprehensive Outpatient Rehabilitation Facilities (CORFs).</p>	
Cardiac rehabilitation services	Nothing.
<p>Comprehensive programs that include exercise, education, and counseling are covered for members who meet certain conditions with a doctor’s order. The plan also covers intensive cardiac rehabilitation programs that are typically more rigorous or more intense than cardiac rehabilitation programs.</p>	

Services that are covered for you	What you must pay when you get these services
Pulmonary rehabilitation services	Nothing.
<p>Comprehensive programs of pulmonary rehabilitation are covered for members who have moderate to very severe chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and an order for pulmonary rehabilitation from the doctor treating their chronic respiratory disease.</p>	
Durable medical equipment and related supplies (<i>Certain services under this item may require authorization or prior authorization.</i>)	20% coinsurance.
<p>(For a definition of “durable medical equipment,” see Chapter 10 of this booklet.)</p>	
<p>Covered items include, but are not limited to: wheelchairs, crutches, hospital bed, IV infusion pump, oxygen equipment, nebulizer, and walker.</p>	
Prosthetic devices and related supplies (<i>Certain services under this item may require authorization or prior authorization.</i>)	20% coinsurance.
<p>Devices (other than dental) that replace a body part or function. These include, but are not limited to: colostomy bags and supplies directly related to colostomy care, braces, prosthetic shoes, artificial limbs, and breast prostheses (including a surgical brassiere after a mastectomy). Includes certain supplies related to prosthetic devices, and repair and/or replacement of prosthetic devices. Also includes some coverage following cataract removal or cataract surgery – see “Vision Care” later in this section for more detail.</p>	
Pacemakers	Nothing.

Services that are covered for you

What you must pay
when you get these
services

Diabetes self-management training, diabetic services and supplies

For all people who have diabetes (insulin and non-insulin users).
Covered services include:

- Blood glucose monitor, blood glucose test strips, lancet devices and lancets, and glucose-control solutions for checking the accuracy of test strips and monitors 20% coinsurance.

No more than a 90-day supply of diabetic supplies will be covered and dispensed at a time.

- For people with diabetes who have severe diabetic foot disease: One pair per calendar year of therapeutic custom-molded shoes (including inserts provided with such shoes) and two additional pairs of inserts, or one pair of depth shoes and three pairs of inserts (not including the non-customized removable inserts provided with such shoes). Coverage includes fitting. 20% coinsurance.

- Diabetes self-management training is covered under certain conditions Nothing for health education.

- Insulin pumps, urine test strips and other diabetic supplies as deemed medically appropriate and necessary (insulin and insulin-related supplies, such as syringes, needles, gauze, alcohol swabs and insulin pen supplies, are covered under the outpatient drug benefit) 20% coinsurance.

No more than a 90-day supply of diabetic supplies will be covered and dispensed at a time.

Outpatient diagnostic tests and therapeutic services and supplies

Covered services include, but are not limited to:

- X-rays 10% coinsurance.

Services that are covered for you	What you must pay when you get these services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Radiation (radium and isotope) therapy including technician materials and supplies 	10% coinsurance.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Surgical supplies, such as dressings 	Nothing.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Splints, casts and other devices used to reduce fractures and dislocations 	Nothing.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Laboratory tests 	Nothing.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blood. Coverage begins with the first pint of blood that you need. Coverage of storage and administration begins with the first pint of blood that you need. 	Nothing.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other outpatient diagnostic tests 	Outpatient Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) and Computing Tomography (CT): 20% coinsurance.

Vision care

Covered services include:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outpatient physician services for the diagnosis and treatment of diseases and conditions of the eye. Original Medicare doesn't cover routine eye exams (eye refractions) for eyeglasses/contacts. 	\$40 copayment per office visit.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For people who are at high risk of glaucoma, such as people with a family history of glaucoma, people with diabetes, and African-Americans who are age 50 and older: glaucoma screening once per year 	Nothing.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One pair of eyeglasses or contact lenses after each cataract surgery that includes insertion of an intraocular lens. (If you have two separate cataract operations, you cannot reserve the benefit after the first surgery and purchase two eyeglasses after the second surgery.) Corrective lenses/frames (and replacements) needed after a cataract removal without a lens implant. 	Nothing.

Services that are covered for you	What you must pay when you get these services
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Routine eye exams. (Does not include visits for diagnosis, treatment and monitoring of conditions of the eye. These services are covered as “Outpatient physician services for eye care.”) <p><i>Limited to one exam per year, unless medically necessary.</i></p>	Nothing.

PREVENTIVE SERVICES

For all preventive services that are covered at no cost under Original Medicare, we also cover the service at no cost to you. However, if you are treated or monitored for an existing medical condition during the visit when you receive the preventive service, a copayment will apply for the care received for the existing medical condition.

Abdominal aortic aneurysm screening

A one-time screening ultrasound for people at risk. The plan only covers this screening if you get a referral for it as a result of your “Welcome to Medicare” physical exam.

Nothing.

Bone mass measurement

For qualified individuals (generally, this means people at risk of losing bone mass or at risk of osteoporosis), the following services are covered every 24 months or more frequently if medically necessary: procedures to identify bone mass, detect bone loss, or determine bone quality, including a physician's interpretation of the results.

Nothing.

Colorectal cancer screening

For people 50 and older, the following are covered:

- Flexible sigmoidoscopy (or screening barium enema as an alternative) every 48 months
 - Fecal occult blood test, every 12 months
-

Nothing.

Services that are covered for you	What you must pay when you get these services
<p>For people at high risk of colorectal cancer, we cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Screening colonoscopy (or screening barium enema as an alternative) every 24 months <p>For people not at high risk of colorectal cancer, we cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Screening colonoscopy every 10 years (120 months), but not within 48 months of a screening sigmoidoscopy	<p>Nothing.</p>
HIV screening	<p>Nothing.</p>
<p>For people who ask for an HIV screening test or who are at increased risk for HIV infection, we cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• One screening exam every 12 months <p>For women who are pregnant, we cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Up to three screening exams during a pregnancy	<p>Nothing.</p>
Immunizations	<p>Nothing.</p>
<p>Covered Medicare Part B services include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pneumonia vaccine• Flu shots, once a year in the fall or winter• Hepatitis B vaccine if you are at high or intermediate risk of getting Hepatitis B• Other vaccines if you are at risk and they meet Medicare Part B coverage rules	

Services that are covered for you	What you must pay when you get these services
Breast cancer screening (mammograms)	Nothing.
Covered services include:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• One baseline mammogram between the ages of 35 and 39• One screening mammogram every 12 months for women age 40 and older• Clinical breast exams once every 24 months	
Cervical and vaginal cancer screening	Nothing.
Covered services include:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• For all women: Pap tests and pelvic exams are covered once every 24 months• If you are at high risk of cervical cancer or have had an abnormal Pap test and are of childbearing age: one Pap test every 12 months	
Prostate cancer screening exams	Nothing.
For men age 50 and older, covered services include the following – once every 12 months:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Digital rectal exam• Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA) test	

Services that are covered for you	What you must pay when you get these services
Cardiovascular disease testing	Nothing.
Blood tests for the detection of cardiovascular disease (or abnormalities associated with an elevated risk of cardiovascular disease) once every 5 years (60 months).	
“Welcome to Medicare” physical exam	
The plan covers a one-time “Welcome to Medicare” physical exam, which includes a review of your health, as well as education and counseling about the preventive services you need (including certain screenings and shots), and referrals for other care if needed.	There is no coinsurance, copayment, or deductible for the Welcome to Medicare exam.
Important: You must have the physical exam within the first 12 months you have Medicare Part B. When you make your appointment, let your doctor’s office know you would like to schedule your “Welcome to Medicare” physical exam.	
The plan also covers routine physical exams. A physician or health care provider will counsel members as to how often health assessments are needed, based on age, sex and health status of the member.	There is no coinsurance, copayment, or deductible for routine physical exams.
Annual wellness visit	
If you’ve had Part B for longer than 12 months, you can get an annual wellness visit to develop or update a personalized prevention plan based on your current health and risk factors. This is covered once every 12 months.	
Note: Your first annual wellness visit can’t take place within 12 months of your “Welcome to Medicare” exam. However, you don’t need to have had a “Welcome to Medicare” exam to be covered for annual wellness visits after you’ve had Part B for 12 months.	

Services that are covered for you	What you must pay when you get these services
<p>Diabetes screening</p> <p>We cover this screening (includes fasting glucose tests) if you have any of the following risk factors: high blood pressure (hypertension), history of abnormal cholesterol and triglyceride levels (dyslipidemia), obesity, or a history of high blood sugar (glucose). Tests may also be covered if you meet other requirements, like being overweight and having a family history of diabetes.</p> <p>Based on the results of these tests, you may be eligible for up to two diabetes screenings every 12 months.</p>	<p>(See “Outpatient diagnostic tests and therapeutic services and supplies,” “Laboratory tests,” above for benefit level.)</p>
<p>Medical nutrition therapy</p> <p>This benefit is for people with diabetes, renal (kidney) disease (but not on dialysis), or after a transplant when ordered by your doctor.</p> <p>We cover 3 hours of one-on-one counseling services during your first year that you receive medical nutrition therapy services under Medicare (this includes our plan, any other Medicare Advantage plan, or Original Medicare), and 2 hours each year after that. If your condition, treatment, or diagnosis changes, you may be able to receive more hours of treatment with a physician’s order. A physician must prescribe these services and renew their order yearly if your treatment is needed into another calendar year.</p>	<p>Nothing.</p>
<p>Smoking and tobacco use cessation (counseling to stop smoking)</p>	<p>If you haven’t been diagnosed with an illness caused or complicated by tobacco use:</p> <p>Nothing.</p>

Services that are covered for you	What you must pay when you get these services
If you use tobacco and have been diagnosed with a tobacco-related disease or are taking medicine that may be affected by tobacco: we cover cessation counseling services. We cover two counseling quit attempts within a 12-month period. Each counseling attempt includes up to four face-to-face visits, however, you will pay the applicable inpatient or outpatient cost sharing.	If you have been diagnosed with an illness caused or complicated by tobacco use, or you take a medicine that is affected by tobacco: Nothing.

OTHER SERVICES

Services to treat kidney disease and conditions

Covered services include:

- | | |
|--|---|
| • Kidney disease education services to teach kidney care and help members make informed decisions about their care. For members with stage IV chronic kidney disease when referred by their doctor, we cover up to six sessions of kidney disease education services per lifetime. | Nothing. |
| • Outpatient dialysis treatments | Nothing. |
| • Inpatient dialysis treatments (if you are admitted as an inpatient to a hospital for special care) | Same as stated under “Inpatient hospital care” above. |
| • Self-dialysis training (includes training for you and anyone helping you with your home dialysis treatments) | Nothing. |
| • Home dialysis equipment and supplies | Nothing. |
| • Certain home support services (such as, when necessary, visits by trained dialysis workers to check on your home dialysis, to help in emergencies, and check your dialysis equipment and water supply) | Nothing. |

Certain drugs for dialysis are covered under your Medicare Part B drug benefit. For information about coverage for Part B Drugs, please go to the section below, “Medicare Part B prescription drugs.”

Services that are covered for you	What you must pay when you get these services
Medicare Part B prescription drugs	20% coinsurance.
<p>These drugs are covered under Part B of Original Medicare. Members of our plan receive coverage for these drugs through our plan. Covered drugs include:</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Drugs that usually aren't self-administered by the patient and are injected or infused while you are getting physician, hospital outpatient, or ambulatory surgical center services• Drugs you take using durable medical equipment (such as nebulizers) that was authorized by the plan• Clotting factors you give yourself by injection if you have hemophilia• Immunosuppressive drugs, if you were enrolled in Medicare Part A at the time of the organ transplant• Injectable osteoporosis drugs, if you are homebound, have a bone fracture that a doctor certifies was related to post-menopausal osteoporosis, and cannot self-administer the drug• Antigens• Certain oral anti-cancer drugs and anti-nausea drugs• Certain drugs for home dialysis, including heparin, the antidote for heparin when medically necessary, topical anesthetics, and erythropoiesis-stimulating agents (such as Procrit® or Aranesp®)• Intravenous Immune Globulin for the home treatment of primary immune deficiency diseases	

Services that are covered for you

What you must pay
when you get these
services

ADDITIONAL BENEFITS

Dental services

In general, preventive dental services (such as cleaning, routine dental exams, and dental x-rays) are not covered by Original Medicare. We cover:

- Treatment of Temporomandibular Disorder (TMD) and Craniomandibular Disorder (CMD) (*Certain services under this item may require authorization or prior authorization.*)

Nothing.

See also “Non-routine dental care” under “Outpatient Services,” “Physician services, including doctor’s office visits.”

Hearing services

Basic hearing evaluations performed by your provider are covered as outpatient care when furnished by a physician, audiologist, or other qualified provider.

- Diagnostic hearing exams
- Routine hearing exams

\$40 copayment per
office visit.

Nothing.

Limited to one exam per year, unless medically necessary.

Services that are covered for you

What you must pay
when you get these
services

Health and wellness education programs

- Two Silver&Fit[®] program options are offered:

- The Silver&Fit[®] Basic Program offers membership at fitness facilities participating in an extensive network. Membership includes standard fitness facility services. Nonstandard services that typically require an additional fee are not included.

Silver&Fit[®] Basic
Program:

\$25 annual non-
refundable fee, but no
monthly membership
dues and no fee to
switch fitness facility.

- The Silver&Fit[®] Home Fitness Program may be selected by members who are unable to go to a fitness facility or prefer to work out at home.

Silver&Fit[®] Home
Fitness Program:

\$10 annual non-
refundable fee.

Limited to 2 kits per year.

To enroll in the Silver&Fit[®] program, members may log on and register to use the Silver&Fit[®] website at www.SilverandFit.com, or call the Silver&Fit[®] toll-free Member Services hotline at 1-877-427-4788 (TTY/TDD 1-877-710-2746).

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- Health education
 - Provider office visit/session in connection with preventive services
 - Provider office visit/session in connection with the management of a chronic health problem

Nothing for health
education.

Services that are covered for you	What you must pay when you get these services
Acupuncture (<i>Certain services under this item may require authorization or prior authorization.</i>) <ul style="list-style-type: none">We cover acupuncture services when medically necessary. <p>Covered services and supplies are based on established medical policies, which are subject to periodic review and modification by the medical or dental directors. These medical policies (medical coverage criteria) are available by calling Member Services.</p>	\$35 copayment per office visit.
Court-ordered mental health evaluation We provide coverage for mental health treatment ordered by a Minnesota court under a valid court order that is issued on the basis of a behavioral care evaluation performed by a licensed psychiatrist or doctoral level licensed psychologist, which includes a diagnosis and an individual treatment plan for care in the most appropriate, least restrictive environment. We must be given a copy of the court order and the behavioral care evaluation, and the service must be a covered benefit under this plan, and the service must be provided by a network provider, or other provider as required by law. We cover the evaluation upon which the court order was based if it was provided by a network provider.	Same as stated under “Inpatient mental health care” or “Outpatient mental health care”, depending on type of service provided.
Family planning services Professional voluntary family planning services. (You may also receive these services from out-of-network providers, as described in the “Specified services from out-of-network providers” benefit later in this “Additional Benefits” section.)	Nothing.
Habilitative care (<i>Certain services under this item may require authorization or prior authorization.</i>) Physical therapy and occupational therapy Speech therapy	\$40 copayment per visit.

Services that are covered for you	What you must pay when you get these services
Hair prostheses	20% coinsurance up to a \$350 maximum benefit per calendar year.
Wigs for hair loss resulting from alopecia areata	
Phenylketonuria (PKU)	20% coinsurance.
Special dietary treatment for PKU	
Routine prenatal, routine postnatal and child health supervision services	Nothing.
Routine prenatal care and exams include visit-specific screening tests, education and counseling. Routine postnatal care and exams to include health exams, assessments, education and counseling relating to the period immediately after childbirth. Child health supervision services, including pediatric preventive services, routine immunizations, developmental assessments and laboratory services appropriate to the age of the child from birth to 72 months, and appropriate immunizations to age 18.	
Second opinion for mental health or substance abuse services	Nothing.
If you question the decision made by a network mental health professional concerning treatment for alcohol or drug abuse or mental health services, we cover a second opinion from another network mental health professional at your request. The coverage decision will not be final until the second network provider is seen. If the determination is that no outpatient or inpatient treatment is necessary, you may request another opinion from a qualified out-of-network mental health professional and we will pay for such an opinion. We will consider the opinion of the out-of-network mental health professional, but are not obligated to accept or act upon the recommendations made by such professional.	

Services that are covered for you	What you must pay when you get these services
<p data-bbox="181 409 967 445">Specified services from out-of-network providers</p> <p data-bbox="181 489 1170 594">We cover the following services, when you elect to receive them from an out-of-network provider, at the same level of coverage we provide when you elect to receive the services from a network provider:</p> <ul data-bbox="181 638 1156 940" style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="181 638 1117 674">• Voluntary family planning of the conception and bearing of children.<li data-bbox="181 716 1065 785">• The provider visit(s) and test(s) necessary to make a diagnosis of infertility.<li data-bbox="181 827 1156 863">• Testing and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases (other than HIV).<li data-bbox="181 905 878 940">• Testing for AIDS or other HIV-related conditions.	Copayment or coinsurance level same as corresponding plan benefit, depending on type of service provided, such as doctor office visits for illness or injury.
Ventilator-dependent services	Nothing.
We cover up to 120 hours of services provided by a private duty nurse or personal care assistant who has provided home care services to a ventilator-dependent patient, solely for the purpose of assuring adequate training of the hospital staff to communicate with that patient.	

Section 2.2	Getting care using our plan's optional extended absence benefit
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When you are absent from our plan's service area for more than 90 days in a row, we usually must disenroll you from our plan. However, we offer as a supplemental benefit an extended absence program, which will allow you to remain enrolled in our plan when you are outside of our service area, but inside the United States, for up to 9 months in a row. Under this program, which is available to all members of this plan who are temporarily in the extended absence area (outside of our service area, but inside the United States), you may receive all plan covered services at in-network out-of-pocket cost sharing. Our extended absence program is described in more detail below.

Extended Absence Benefit

Our plan covers services that you receive from out-of-network providers while you are temporarily outside the service area, but inside the United States, for up to 9 months in a row. The services must be covered services described in this chapter.

To use this benefit, you must activate it by notifying Member Services. You may call us at the telephone numbers shown in Chapter 2 or, if you are registered, notify us on our website at **healthpartners.com/medicare**, preferably before you begin each temporary absence. Notifying Member Services sets up the process that will authorize claims from out-of-network providers to be paid during the period of time you have indicated you will be outside the service area, but inside the United States. Upon activation, coverage under this benefit will begin immediately.

For services to be covered under this benefit, the out-of-network providers you use must participate with the Medicare program. Before you receive services, ask if the provider participates with the Medicare program. You must present both your Medicare card and plan membership card to the out-of-network provider at the time you receive services.

To use this benefit, you must remain a permanent resident of the service area. If you move permanently to a location outside the service area, you are not eligible to use the Extended Absence Benefit.

When you return to the service area, you must use network providers, except for emergency and urgently needed care services, to receive the highest level of coverage under this Evidence of Coverage.

If you are in the extended absence area (outside our service area, but inside the United States), you can stay enrolled in our plan for up to 9 months. If you have not returned to the plan's service area within 9 months, you will be disenrolled from the plan. For more information, see Chapter 8.

SECTION 3 What benefits are not covered by the plan?

Section 3.1 Benefits we do <i>not</i> cover (exclusions)
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This section tells you what kinds of benefits are “excluded.” Excluded means that the plan doesn't cover these benefits.

The list below describes some services and items that aren't covered under any conditions and some that are excluded only under specific conditions.

If you get benefits that are excluded, you must pay for them yourself. We won't pay for the excluded medical benefits listed in this section (or elsewhere in this booklet), and neither will Original Medicare. The only exception: If a benefit on the exclusion list is found upon appeal to be a medical benefit that we should have paid for or covered because of your specific situation. (For information about appealing a decision we have made to not cover a medical service, go to Chapter 7, Section 5.3 in this booklet.)

In addition to any exclusions or limitations described in the Medical Benefits Chart, or anywhere else in this *Evidence of Coverage*, including the “Extra ‘optional supplemental’ benefits you can buy” (“Freedom Comprehensive Dental Benefit”) insert you received if you are enrolled for the benefit, **the following items and services aren’t covered under Original Medicare or by our plan:**

- Services considered not reasonable and necessary, according to the standards of Original Medicare, unless these services are listed by our plan as covered services.
- Experimental medical and surgical procedures, equipment and medications, unless covered by Original Medicare or under a Medicare-approved clinical research study. (See Chapter 3, Section 5 for more information on clinical research studies.) Experimental procedures and items are those items and procedures determined by our plan and Original Medicare to not be generally accepted by the medical community.
- Surgical treatment for morbid obesity, except when it is considered medically necessary and covered under Original Medicare.
- Private room in a hospital, except when it is considered medically necessary.
- Private duty nurses.
- Personal items in your room at a hospital or a skilled nursing facility, such as a telephone or a television.
- Full-time nursing care in your home.
- Custodial care, unless it is provided with covered skilled nursing care and/or skilled rehabilitation services. Custodial care, or non-skilled care, is care that helps you with activities of daily living, such as bathing or dressing.
- Homemaker services include basic household assistance, including light housekeeping or light meal preparation.
- Fees charged by your immediate relatives or members of your household.
- Meals delivered to your home.
- Elective or voluntary enhancement procedures or services (including weight loss, hair growth, sexual performance, athletic performance, cosmetic purposes, anti-aging and mental performance), except when medically necessary.
- Cosmetic surgery or procedures, unless because of an accidental injury or to improve a malformed part of the body. However, all stages of reconstruction are covered for a breast after a mastectomy, as well as for the unaffected breast to produce a symmetrical appearance. In addition, we cover reconstructive surgery, incidental to or following surgery, resulting from injury or illness of the involved part, or to correct a congenital disease or anomaly resulting in functional defect in a dependent child, as determined by the attending physician.

- Routine dental care, such as cleanings, fillings or dentures, except as may be covered in the Medical Benefits Chart or in the “Extra ‘optional supplemental’ benefits you can buy” (“Freedom Comprehensive Dental Benefit”) insert you received if you are enrolled for the benefit. However, non-routine dental care required to treat illness or injury may be covered as inpatient or outpatient care.
- Chiropractic care, other than manual manipulation of the spine (as outlined in the Medical Benefits Chart) consistent with Medicare coverage guidelines.
- Orthopedic shoes, unless the shoes are part of a leg brace and are included in the cost of the brace or the shoes are for a person with diabetic foot disease.
- Supportive devices for the feet, except for orthopedic or therapeutic shoes for people with diabetic foot disease.
- Routine hearing exams, hearing aids, or exams to fit hearing aids (except as may be covered in the Medical Benefits Chart).
- Eyeglasses, routine eye examinations (except as covered in the Medical Benefits Chart), radial keratotomy, LASIK surgery, vision therapy and other low vision aids. However, eyeglasses are covered for people after cataract surgery.
- Outpatient prescription drugs.
- Reversal of sterilization procedures, sex change operations, and non-prescription contraceptive supplies.
- Naturopath services (uses natural or alternative treatments).
- Services provided to veterans in Veterans Affairs (VA) facilities. However, when emergency services are received at a VA hospital and the VA cost sharing is more than the cost sharing under our plan, we will reimburse veterans for the difference. Members are still responsible for our cost-sharing amounts.

The plan will not cover the excluded services listed above. Even if you receive the services at an emergency facility, the excluded services are still not covered.

Chapter 5. Asking us to pay our share of a bill you have received for covered medical services

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SECTION 1 Situations in which you should ask us to pay our share of the cost of your covered services

Section 1.1	If you pay our plan's share of the cost of your covered services, or if you receive a bill, you can ask us for payment
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Sometimes when you get medical care, you may need to pay the full cost right away. Other times, you may find that you have paid more than you expected under the coverage rules of the plan. In either case, you can ask our plan to pay you back (paying you back is often called “reimbursing” you). It is your right to be paid back by our plan whenever you’ve paid more than your share of the cost for medical services that are covered by our plan.

There may also be times when you get a bill from a provider for the full cost of medical care you have received. In many cases, you should send this bill to us instead of paying it. We will look at the bill and decide whether the services should be covered. If we decide they should be covered, we will pay the provider directly.

Here are examples of situations in which you may need to ask our plan to pay you back or to pay a bill you have received:

1. When you’ve received emergency or urgently needed medical care from a provider who is not in our plan’s network

You can receive emergency services from any provider, whether or not the provider is a part of our network. When you receive emergency or urgently needed care from a provider who is not part of our network, you are only responsible for paying your share of the cost, not for the entire cost. You should ask the provider to bill the plan for our share of the cost.

- If you pay the entire amount yourself at the time you receive the care, you need to ask us to pay you back for our share of the cost. Send us the bill, along with documentation of any payments you have made.
- At times you may get a bill from the provider asking for payment that you think you do not owe. Send us this bill, along with documentation of any payments you have already made.
 - If the provider is owed anything, we will pay the provider directly.
 - If you have already paid more than your share of the cost of the service, we will determine how much you owed and pay you back for our share of the cost.

2. When a network provider sends you a bill you think you should not pay

Network providers should always bill the plan directly, and ask you only for your share of the cost. But sometimes they make mistakes, and ask you to pay more than your share.

- Whenever you get a bill from a network provider that you think is more than you should pay, send us the bill. We will contact the provider directly and resolve the billing problem.
- If you have already paid a bill to a network provider, but you feel that you paid too much, send us the bill along with documentation of any payment you have made and ask us to pay you back the difference between the amount you paid and the amount you owed under the plan.

3. If you are retroactively enrolled in our plan.

Sometimes a person's enrollment in the plan is retroactive. (Retroactive means that the first day of their enrollment has already passed. The enrollment date may even have occurred last year.)

If you were retroactively enrolled in our plan and you paid out-of-pocket for any of your covered services after your enrollment date, you can ask us to pay you back for our share of the costs. You will need to submit paperwork for us to handle the reimbursement.

- Please call Member Services for additional information about how to ask us to pay you back and deadlines for making your request.

All of the examples above are types of coverage decisions. This means that if we deny your request for payment, you can appeal our decision. Chapter 7 of this booklet (*What to do if you have a problem or complaint (coverage decisions, appeals, complaints)*) has information about how to make an appeal.

SECTION 2 How to ask us to pay you back or to pay a bill you have received

Section 2.1 How and where to send us your request for payment

Send us your request for payment, along with your bill and documentation of any payment you have made. It's a good idea to make a copy of your bill and receipts for your records.

Mail your request for payment together with any bills or receipts to us at this address:

HealthPartners
P.O. Box 1289
Minneapolis, MN 55440-1289

Please be sure to contact Member Services if you have any questions. If you don't know what you should have paid, or you receive bills and you don't know what to do about those bills, we can help. You can also call if you want to give us more information about a request for payment you have already sent to us.

SECTION 3 We will consider your request for payment and say yes or no

Section 3.1 We check to see whether we should cover the service and how much we owe

When we receive your request for payment, we will let you know if we need any additional information from you. Otherwise, we will consider your request and make a coverage decision.

- If we decide that the medical care is covered and you followed all the rules for getting the care, we will pay for our share of the cost. If you have already paid for the service, we will mail your reimbursement of our share of the cost to you. If you have not paid for the service yet, we will mail the payment directly to the provider. (Chapter 3 explains the rules you need to follow for getting your medical services covered.)
- If we decide that the medical care is *not* covered, or you did *not* follow all the rules, we will not pay for our share of the cost. Instead, we will send you a letter that explains the reasons why we are not sending the payment you have requested and your rights to appeal that decision.

Section 3.2 If we tell you that we will not pay for all or part of the medical care, you can make an appeal

If you think we have made a mistake in turning down your request for payment or you don't agree with the amount we are paying, you can make an appeal. If you make an appeal, it means you are asking us to change the decision we made when we turned down your request for payment.

For the details on how to make this appeal, go to Chapter 7 of this booklet (*What to do if you have a problem or complaint (coverage decisions, appeals, complaints)*). The appeals process is a detailed legal process with complicated procedures and important deadlines. If making an appeal is new to you, you will find it helpful to start by reading Section 4 of Chapter 7. Section 4 is an introductory section that explains the process for coverage decisions and appeals and gives definitions of terms such as "appeal." Then after you have read Section 4, you can go to the section in Chapter 7 that tells what to do for your situation:

- If you want to make an appeal about getting paid back for a medical service, go to Section 5.3 in Chapter 7.

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SECTION 1 We must honor your rights as a member of the plan

Section 1.1	We must provide information in a way that works for you (in languages other than English, in audiotapes, in large print, or other alternate formats, etc.)
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To get information from us in a way that works for you, please call Member Services (phone numbers are on the back cover of this booklet).

Our plan has people and free language interpreter services available to answer questions from non-English speaking members. We can also give you information in audiotapes, in large print, or other alternate formats if you need it. If you are eligible for Medicare because of a disability, we are required to give you information about the plan's benefits that is accessible and appropriate for you.

If you have any trouble getting information from us because of problems related to language or a disability, please call Medicare at 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227), 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and tell them that you want to file a complaint. TTY users call 1-877-486-2048.

Section 1.2	We must treat you with fairness and respect at all times
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Our plan must obey laws that protect you from discrimination or unfair treatment. **We do not discriminate** based on a person's race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, gender, age, mental or physical disability, health status, claims experience, medical history, genetic information, evidence of insurability, or geographic location within the service area.

If you want more information or have concerns about discrimination or unfair treatment, please call the Department of Health and Human Services' **Office for Civil Rights** 1-800-368-1019 (TTY 1-800-537-7697) or your local Office for Civil Rights.

If you have a disability and need help with access to care, please call us at Member Services (phone numbers are on the back cover of this booklet). If you have a complaint, such as a problem with wheelchair access, Member Services can help.

Section 1.3	We must ensure that you get timely access to your covered services
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As a member of our plan, you have the right to choose a primary care provider (PCP) in the plan's network to provide and arrange for your covered services (Chapter 3 explains more about this). Call Member Services to learn which doctors are accepting new patients (phone numbers are on the back cover of this booklet). We do not require you to get referrals to go to network providers.

As a plan member, you have the right to get appointments and covered services from the plan's network of providers *within a reasonable amount of time*. This includes the right to get timely services from specialists when you need that care.

If you think that you are not getting your medical care within a reasonable amount of time, Chapter 7, Section 9 of this booklet tells what you can do. (If we have denied coverage for your medical care and you don't agree with our decision, Chapter 7, Section 4 tells what you can do.)

Section 1.4	We must protect the privacy of your personal health information
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Federal and state laws protect the privacy of your medical records and personal health information. We protect your personal health information as required by these laws.

- Your “personal health information” includes the personal information you gave us when you enrolled in this plan as well as your medical records and other medical and health information.
- The laws that protect your privacy give you rights related to getting information and controlling how your health information is used. We give you a written notice, called a “Notice of Privacy Practice,” that tells about these rights and explains how we protect the privacy of your health information.

How do we protect the privacy of your health information?

- We make sure that unauthorized people don't see or change your records.
- In most situations, if we give your health information to anyone who isn't providing your care or paying for your care, *we are required to get written permission from you first*. Written permission can be given by you or by someone you have given legal power to make decisions for you.
- There are certain exceptions that do not require us to get your written permission first. These exceptions are allowed or required by law.
 - For example, we are required to release health information to government agencies that are checking on quality of care.
 - Because you are a member of our plan through Medicare, we are required to give Medicare your health information. If Medicare releases your information for research or other uses, this will be done according to Federal statutes and regulations.

You can see the information in your records and know how it has been shared with others

You have the right to look at your medical records held at the plan, and to get a copy of your records. We are allowed to charge you a fee for making copies. You also have the right to ask us to make additions or corrections to your medical records. If you ask us to do this, we will work with your health care provider to decide whether the changes should be made.

You have the right to know how your health information has been shared with others for any purposes that are not routine.

If you have questions or concerns about the privacy of your personal health information, please call Member Services (phone numbers are on the back cover of this booklet).

Section 1.5	We must give you information about the plan, its network of providers, and your covered services
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As a member of our plan, you have the right to get several kinds of information from us. (As explained above in Section 1.1, you have the right to get information from us in a way that works for you. This includes getting the information in languages other than English, in audiotapes and in large print or other alternate formats.)

If you want any of the following kinds of information, please call Member Services (phone numbers are on the back cover of this booklet):

- **Information about our plan.** This includes, for example, information about the plan's financial condition. It also includes information about the number of appeals made by members and the plan's performance ratings, including how it has been rated by plan members and how it compares to other Medicare health plans.
- **Information about our network providers.**
 - For example, you have the right to get information from us about the qualifications of the providers in our network and how we pay the providers in our network.
 - For a list of the providers in the plan's network, see the HealthPartners® Freedom (Cost) Network 2012 Provider Directory.
 - For more detailed information about our providers, you can call Member Services (phone numbers are on the back cover of this booklet) or visit our website at healthpartners.com/medicare.

- **Information about your coverage and rules you must follow in using your coverage.**
 - In Chapters 3 and 4 of this booklet, we explain what medical services are covered for you, any restrictions to your coverage, and what rules you must follow to get your covered medical services.
 - If you have questions about the rules or restrictions, please call Member Services (phone numbers are on the back cover of this booklet).
- **Information about why something is not covered and what you can do about it.**
 - If a medical service is not covered for you, or if your coverage is restricted in some way, you can ask us for a written explanation. You have the right to this explanation even if you received the medical service from an out-of-network provider.
 - If you are not happy or if you disagree with a decision we make about what medical care is covered for you, you have the right to ask us to change the decision. You can ask us to change the decision by making an appeal. For details on what to do if something is not covered for you in the way you think it should be covered, see Chapter 7 of this booklet. It gives you the details about how to make an appeal if you want us to change our decision. (Chapter 7 also tells about how to make a complaint about quality of care, waiting times, and other concerns.)
 - If you want to ask our plan to pay our share of a bill you have received for medical care, see Chapter 5 of this booklet.

Section 1.6	We must support your right to make decisions about your care
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You have the right to know your treatment options and participate in decisions about your health care

You have the right to get full information from your doctors and other health care providers when you go for medical care. Your providers must explain your medical condition and your treatment choices *in a way that you can understand*.

You also have the right to participate fully in decisions about your health care. To help you make decisions with your doctors about what treatment is best for you, your rights include the following:

- **To know about all of your choices.** This means that you have the right to be told about all of the treatment options that are recommended for your condition, no matter what they cost or whether they are covered by our plan.

- **To know about the risks.** You have the right to be told about any risks involved in your care. You must be told in advance if any proposed medical care or treatment is part of a research experiment. You always have the choice to refuse any experimental treatments.
- **The right to say “no.”** You have the right to refuse any recommended treatment. This includes the right to leave a hospital or other medical facility, even if your doctor advises you not to leave. Of course, if you refuse treatment, you accept full responsibility for what happens to your body as a result.
- **To receive an explanation if you are denied coverage for care.** You have the right to receive an explanation from us if a provider has denied care that you believe you should receive. To receive this explanation, you will need to ask us for a coverage decision. Chapter 7 of this booklet tells how to ask us for a coverage decision.

You have the right to give instructions about what is to be done if you are not able to make medical decisions for yourself

Sometimes people become unable to make health care decisions for themselves due to accidents or serious illness. You have the right to say what you want to happen if you are in this situation. This means that, *if you want to*, you can:

- Fill out a written form to give **someone the legal authority to make medical decisions for you** if you ever become unable to make decisions for yourself.
- **Give your doctors written instructions** about how you want them to handle your medical care if you become unable to make decisions for yourself.

The legal documents that you can use to give your directions in advance in these situations are called “**advance directives**.” There are different types of advance directives and different names for them. Documents called “**living will**” and “**power of attorney for health care**” are examples of advance directives.

If you want to use an “advance directive” to give your instructions, here is what to do:

- **Get the form.** If you want to have an advance directive, you can get a form from your lawyer, from a social worker, or from some office supply stores. You can sometimes get advance directive forms from organizations that give people information about Medicare. You can also contact Member Services to ask for the forms (phone numbers are on the back cover of this booklet).
- **Fill it out and sign it.** Regardless of where you get this form, keep in mind that it is a legal document. You should consider having a lawyer help you prepare it.
- **Give copies to appropriate people.** You should give a copy of the form to your doctor and to the person you name on the form as the one to make decisions for you if you can’t. You may want to give copies to close friends or family members as well. Be sure to keep a copy at home.

If you know ahead of time that you are going to be hospitalized, and you have signed an advance directive, **take a copy with you to the hospital.**

- If you are admitted to the hospital, they will ask you whether you have signed an advance directive form and whether you have it with you.
- If you have not signed an advance directive form, the hospital has forms available and will ask if you want to sign one.

Remember, it is your choice whether you want to fill out an advance directive (including whether you want to sign one if you are in the hospital). According to law, no one can deny you care or discriminate against you based on whether or not you have signed an advance directive.

What if your instructions are not followed?

If you have signed an advance directive, and you believe that a doctor or hospital hasn't followed the instructions in it, you may file a complaint with the Minnesota Office of Health Facility Complaints at P.O. Box 64970, St. Paul, MN 55164-0970, 651-201-4201 or 1-800-369-7994 or call Member Services.

Section 1.7	You have the right to make complaints and to ask us to reconsider decisions we have made
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If you have any problems or concerns about your covered services or care, Chapter 7 of this booklet tells what you can do. It gives the details about how to deal with all types of problems and complaints.

As explained in Chapter 7, what you need to do to follow up on a problem or concern depends on the situation. You might need to ask us to make a coverage decision for you, make an appeal to us to change a coverage decision, or make a complaint. Whatever you do – ask for a coverage decision, make an appeal, or make a complaint – **we are required to treat you fairly.**

You have the right to get a summary of information about the appeals and complaints that other members have filed against our plan in the past. To get this information, please call Member Services (phone numbers are on the back cover of this booklet).

Section 1.8	What can you do if you think you are being treated unfairly or your rights are not being respected?
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If it is about discrimination, call the Office for Civil Rights

If you think you have been treated unfairly or your rights have not been respected due to your race, disability, religion, sex, health, ethnicity, creed (beliefs), age, or national origin, you should call the Department of Health and Human Services' **Office for Civil Rights** at 1-800-368-1019 or TTY 1-800-537-7697, or call your local Office for Civil Rights.

Is it about something else?

If you think you have been treated unfairly or your rights have not been respected, *and it's not* about discrimination, you can get help dealing with the problem you are having:

- You can **call Member Services** (phone numbers are on the back cover of this booklet).
- You can **call the State Health Insurance Assistance Program**. For details about this organization and how to contact it, turn to Chapter 2 of this booklet and look for Section 3.
- Or, **you can call Medicare** at 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227), 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.

Section 1.9 How to get more information about your rights

There are several places where you can get more information about your rights:

- You can **call Member Services** (phone numbers are on the back cover of this booklet).
- You can **call the State Health Insurance Assistance Program**. For details about this organization and how to contact it, go to Chapter 2, Section 3.
- You can contact **Medicare**.
 - You can visit the Medicare website to read or download the publication “Your Medicare Rights & Protections.” (The publication is available at: <http://www.medicare.gov/Publications/Pubs/pdf/10112.pdf>.)
 - Or, you can call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227), 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.

SECTION 2 You have some responsibilities as a member of the plan

Section 2.1 What are your responsibilities?

Things you need to do as a member of the plan are listed below. If you have any questions, please call Member Services (phone numbers are on the back cover of this booklet). We're here to help.

- ***Get familiar with your covered services and the rules you must follow to get these covered services.*** Use this Evidence of Coverage booklet to learn what is covered for you and the rules you need to follow to get your covered services.
 - Chapters 3 and 4 give the details about your medical services, including what is covered, what is not covered, rules to follow, and what you pay.

- ***If you have any other health insurance coverage in addition to our plan, you are required to tell us.*** Please call Member Services to let us know.
 - We are required to follow rules set by Medicare to make sure that you are using all of your coverage in combination when you get your covered services from our plan. This is called “**coordination of benefits**” because it involves coordinating the health benefits you get from our plan with any other health benefits available to you. We’ll help you with it. (For more information about coordination of benefits, go to Chapter 1, Section 7.)
- ***Tell your doctor and other health care providers that you are enrolled in our plan.*** Show your plan membership card whenever you get your medical care.
 - Notifying out-of-network providers when seeking care (unless it is an emergency) that although you are enrolled in our plan, the provider should bill Original Medicare. You should present your membership card and your Medicare card.
- ***Help your doctors and other providers help you by giving them information, asking questions, and following through on your care.***
 - To help your doctors and other health providers give you the best care, learn as much as you are able to about your health problems and give them the information they need about you and your health. Follow the treatment plans and instructions that you and your doctors agree upon.
 - Make sure your doctors know all of the drugs you are taking, including over-the-counter drugs, vitamins, and supplements.
 - If you have any questions, be sure to ask. Your doctors and other health care providers are supposed to explain things in a way you can understand. If you ask a question and you don’t understand the answer you are given, ask again.
- ***Be considerate.*** We expect all our members to respect the rights of other patients. We also expect you to act in a way that helps the smooth running of your doctor’s office, hospitals, and other offices.
- ***Pay what you owe.*** As a plan member, you are responsible for these payments:
 - You must pay your plan premiums to continue being a member of our plan.
 - In order to be eligible for our plan, you must be entitled to Medicare Part A or enrolled in Medicare Part B. For that reason, some plan members must pay a premium for Medicare Part A and most plan members must pay a premium for Medicare Part B to remain a member of the plan.
 - For most of your medical services covered by the plan, you must pay your share of the cost when you get the service. This will be a copayment (a fixed amount) or coinsurance (a percentage of the total cost). Chapter 4 tells what you must pay for your medical services.

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- If you get any medical services that are not covered by our plan or by other insurance you may have, you must pay the full cost.
 - If you disagree with our decision to deny coverage for a service, you can make an appeal. Please see Chapter 7 of this booklet for information about how to make an appeal.
 - If you are required to pay a late enrollment penalty, you must pay the penalty to remain a member of the plan.
 - **Tell us if you move.** *If you are going to move, it's important to tell us right away. Call Member Services (phone numbers are on the back cover of this booklet).*
 - **If you move *outside* of our plan service area, you cannot remain a member of our plan.** (Chapter 1 tells about our service area.) We can help you figure out whether you are moving outside our service area. If you are leaving our service area, we can let you know if we have a plan in your new area.
 - **If you move *within* our service area, we still need to know** so we can keep your membership record up to date and know how to contact you.
 - **Call member services for help if you have questions or concerns.** *We also welcome any suggestions you may have for improving our plan.*
 - Phone numbers and calling hours for Member Services are on the back cover of this booklet.
 - For more information on how to reach us, including our mailing address, please see Chapter 2.

Chapter 7. What to do if you have a problem or complaint (coverage decisions, appeals, complaints)

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BACKGROUND

SECTION 1 Introduction

Section 1.1 What to do if you have a problem or concern

This chapter explains two types of processes for handling problems and concerns:

- For some types of problems, you need to use the **process for coverage decisions and making appeals**.
- For other types of problems, you need to use the **process for making complaints**.

Both of these processes have been approved by Medicare. To ensure fairness and prompt handling of your problems, each process has a set of rules, procedures, and deadlines that must be followed by us and by you.

Which one do you use? That depends on the type of problem you are having. The guide in Section 3 will help you identify the right process to use.

Section 1.2 What about the legal terms?

There are technical legal terms for some of the rules, procedures, and types of deadlines explained in this chapter. Many of these terms are unfamiliar to most people and can be hard to understand.

To keep things simple, this chapter explains the legal rules and procedures using simpler words in place of certain legal terms. For example, this chapter generally says “making a complaint” rather than “filing a grievance,” “coverage decision” rather than “organization determination” and “Independent Review Organization” instead of “Independent Review Entity.” It also uses abbreviations as little as possible.

However, it can be helpful – and sometimes quite important – for you to know the correct legal terms for the situation you are in. Knowing which terms to use will help you communicate more clearly and accurately when you are dealing with your problem and get the right help or information for your situation. To help you know which terms to use, we include legal terms when we give the details for handling specific types of situations.

SECTION 2 You can get help from government organizations that are not connected with us

Section 2.1 Where to get more information and personalized assistance

Sometimes it can be confusing to start or follow through the process for dealing with a problem. This can be especially true if you do not feel well or have limited energy. Other times, you may not have the knowledge you need to take the next step.

Get help from an independent government organization

We are always available to help you. But in some situations you may also want help or guidance from someone who is not connected with us. You can always contact your **State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP)**. This government program has trained counselors in every state. The program is not connected with us or with any insurance company or health plan. The counselors at this program can help you understand which process you should use to handle a problem you are having. They can also answer your questions, give you more information, and offer guidance on what to do.

The services of SHIP counselors are free. You will find phone numbers in Chapter 2, Section 3 of this booklet.

You can also get help and information from Medicare

For more information and help in handling a problem, you can also contact Medicare. Here are two ways to get information directly from Medicare:

- You can call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227), 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.
- You can visit the Medicare website (<http://www.medicare.gov>).

SECTION 3 To deal with your problem, which process should you use?

Section 3.1 Should you use the process for coverage decisions and appeals? Or should you use the process for making complaints?

If you have a problem or concern, you only need to read the parts of this chapter that apply to your situation. The guide that follows will help.

To figure out which part of this chapter will help with your specific problem or concern, START HERE	
Is your problem or concern about your benefits or coverage? (This includes problems about whether particular medical care is covered or not, the way in which it is covered, and problems related to payment for medical care.)	
Yes. My problem is about benefits or coverage.	No. My problem is <u>not</u> about benefits or coverage.
Go on to the next section of this chapter, Section 4: “A guide to the basics of coverage decisions and making appeals.”	Skip ahead to Section 9 at the end of this chapter: “How to make a complaint about quality of care, waiting times, customer service or other concerns.”

COVERAGE DECISIONS AND APPEALS

SECTION 4 A guide to the basics of coverage decisions and appeals

Section 4.1 Asking for coverage decisions and making appeals: the big picture

The process for coverage decisions and making appeals deals with problems related to your benefits and coverage for medical services, including problems related to payment. This is the process you use for issues such as whether something is covered or not and the way in which something is covered.

Asking for coverage decisions

A coverage decision is a decision we make about your benefits and coverage or about the amount we will pay for your medical services. For example, your plan network doctor makes a (favorable) coverage decision for you whenever you receive medical care from him or her or if your network doctor refers you to a medical specialist. You can also contact us and ask for a coverage decision if your doctor is unsure whether we will cover a particular medical service or refuses to provide medical care you think that you need. In other words, if you want to know if we will cover a medical service before you receive it, you can ask us to make a coverage decision for you.

We are making a coverage decision for you whenever we decide what is covered for you and how much we pay. In some cases we might decide a service is not covered or is no longer covered by Medicare for you. If you disagree with this coverage decision, you can make an appeal.

Making an appeal

If we make a coverage decision and you are not satisfied with this decision, you can “appeal” the decision. An appeal is a formal way of asking us to review and change a coverage decision we have made.

When you make an appeal we review the coverage decision we have made to check to see if we were following all of the rules properly. Your appeal is handled by different reviewers than those who made the original unfavorable decision. When we have completed the review we give you our decision.

If we say no to all or part of your Level 1 Appeal, you can go on to a Level 2 Appeal. The Level 2 Appeal is conducted by an independent organization that is not connected to us. (In some situations, your case will be automatically sent to the independent organization for a Level 2 Appeal. If this happens, we will let you know. In other situations, you will need to ask for a Level 2 Appeal.) If you are not satisfied with the decision at the Level 2 Appeal, you may be able to continue through several more levels of appeal.

Section 4.2	How to get help when you are asking for a coverage decision or making an appeal
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Would you like some help? Here are resources you may wish to use if you decide to ask for any kind of coverage decision or appeal a decision:

- You **can call us at Member Services** (phone numbers are on the back cover of this booklet).
- To **get free help from an independent organization** that is not connected with our plan, contact your State Health Insurance Assistance Program (see Section 2 of this chapter).
- **Your doctor or other provider can make a request for you.** Your doctor or other provider can request a coverage decision or a Level 1 Appeal on your behalf. To request any appeal after Level 1, your doctor or other provider must be appointed as your representative.
- **You can ask someone to act on your behalf.** If you want to, you can name another person to act for you as your “representative” to ask for a coverage decision or make an appeal.
 - There may be someone who is already legally authorized to act as your representative under State law.

- If you want a friend, relative, your doctor or other provider, or other person to be your representative, call Member Services and ask for the “Appointment of Representative” form. (The form is also available on Medicare’s website at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/cmsforms/downloads/cms1696.pdf>.) The form gives that person permission to act on your behalf. It must be signed by you and by the person who you would like to act on your behalf. You must give us a copy of the signed form.
- **You also have the right to hire a lawyer to act for you.** You may contact your own lawyer, or get the name of a lawyer from your local bar association or other referral service. There are also groups that will give you free legal services if you qualify. However, **you are not required to hire a lawyer** to ask for any kind of coverage decision or appeal a decision.

Section 4.3	Which section of this chapter gives the details for <u>your</u> situation?
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There are three different types of situations that involve coverage decisions and appeals. Since each situation has different rules and deadlines, we give the details for each one in a separate section:

- **Section 5** of this chapter: “Your medical care: How to ask for a coverage decision or make an appeal”
- **Section 6** of this chapter: “How to ask us to cover a longer inpatient hospital stay if you think the doctor is discharging you too soon”
- **Section 7** of this chapter: “How to ask us to keep covering certain medical services if you think your coverage is ending too soon” (*Applies to these services only*: home health care, skilled nursing facility care, and Comprehensive Outpatient Rehabilitation Facility (CORF) services)

If you’re not sure which section you should be using, please call Member Services (phone numbers are on the back cover of this booklet). You can also get help or information from government organizations such as your State Health Insurance Assistance Program (Chapter 2, Section 3, of this booklet has the phone numbers for this program).

SECTION 5 Your medical care: How to ask for a coverage decision or make an appeal

Have you read Section 4 of this chapter (*A guide to “the basics” of coverage decisions and appeals*)? If not, you may want to read it before you start this section.

Section 5.1 This section tells what to do if you have problems getting coverage for medical care or if you want us to pay you back for our share of the cost of your care

This section is about your benefits for medical care and services. These benefits are described in Chapter 4 of this booklet: *Medical Benefits Chart (what is covered and what you pay)*. To keep things simple, we generally refer to “medical care coverage” or “medical care” in the rest of this section, instead of repeating “medical care or treatment or services” every time.

If you have a complaint about a bill when you receive care from an out-of-network provider, the appeals process described will not apply, unless you were directed to go to an out-of-network provider by us or one of the network providers, or the service was provided outside of the United States.

You should refer to the notice of the service (called the “Medicare Summary Notice”) you receive from Original Medicare. The Medicare Summary Notice provides information on how to appeal a decision made by Original Medicare.

This section tells what you can do if you are in any of the five following situations:

1. You are not getting certain medical care you want, and you believe that this care is covered by our plan.
2. We will not approve the medical care your doctor or other medical provider wants to give you, and you believe that this care is covered by the plan.
3. You have received medical care or services that you believe should be covered by the plan, but we have said we will not pay for this care.
4. You have received and paid for medical care or services that you believe should be covered by the plan, and you want to ask us to reimburse you for this care.
5. You are being told that coverage for certain medical care you have been getting that we previously approved will be reduced or stopped, and you believe that reducing or stopping this care could harm your health.
 - **NOTE: If the coverage that will be stopped is for hospital care, home health care, skilled nursing facility care, or Comprehensive Outpatient Rehabilitation Facility (CORF) services, you need to read a separate section of**

this chapter because special rules apply to these types of care. Here's what to read in those situations:

- Chapter 7, Section 6: *How to ask us for a longer hospital stay if you think you are being asked to leave the hospital too soon.*
- Chapter 7, Section 7: *How to ask us to keep covering certain medical services if you think your coverage is ending too soon.* This section is about three services only: home health care, skilled nursing facility care, and Comprehensive Outpatient Rehabilitation Facility (CORF) services.
- For *all other* situations that involve being told that medical care you have been getting will be stopped, use this section (Section 5) as your guide for what to do.

Which of these situations are you in?	
If you are in this situation:	This is what you can do:
Do you want to find out whether we will cover the medical care or services you want?	You can ask us to make a coverage decision for you. Go to the next section of this chapter, Section 5.2 .
Have we already told you that we will not cover or pay for a medical service in the way that you want it to be covered or paid for?	You can make an appeal . (This means you are asking us to reconsider.) Skip ahead to Section 5.3 of this chapter.
Do you want to ask us to pay you back for medical care or services you have already received and paid for?	You can send us the bill. Skip ahead to Section 5.5 of this chapter.

Section 5.2	Step-by-step: How to ask for a coverage decision (how to ask us to authorize or provide the medical care coverage you want)
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Legal Terms	When a coverage decision involves your medical care, it is called an “ organization determination. ”
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Step 1: You ask us to make a coverage decision on the medical care you are requesting. If your health requires a quick response, you should ask us to make a “**fast decision.**”

Legal Terms	A “fast decision” is called an “ expedited determination. ”
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How to request coverage for the medical care you want

- Start by calling, writing, or faxing us to make your request for us to provide coverage for the medical care you want. You, your doctor, or your representative can do this.
- For the details on how to contact us, go to Chapter 2, Section 1 and look for the section called, *How to contact us when you are asking for a coverage decision about your medical care.*

Generally we use the standard deadlines for giving you our decision

When we give you our decision, we will use the “standard” deadlines unless we have agreed to use the “fast” deadlines. **A standard decision means we will give you an answer within 14 days** after we receive your request.

- **However, we can take up to 14 more calendar days** if you ask for more time, or if we need information (such as medical records) that may benefit you. If we decide to take extra days to make the decision, we will tell you in writing.
- If you believe we should *not* take extra days, you can file a “fast complaint” about our decision to take extra days. When you file a fast complaint, we will give you an answer to your complaint within 24 hours. (The process for making a complaint is different from the process for coverage decisions and appeals. For more information about the process for making complaints, including fast complaints, see Section 9 of this chapter.)

If your health requires it, ask us to give you a “fast decision”

- **A fast decision means we will answer within 72 hours.**
 - **However, we can take up to 14 more calendar days** if we find that some information that may benefit you is missing, or if you need time to get information to us for the review. If we decide to take extra days, we will tell you in writing.
 - If you believe we should *not* take extra days, you can file a “fast complaint” about our decision to take extra days. (For more information about the process for making complaints, including fast complaints, see Section 9 of this chapter.) We will call you as soon as we make the decision.
- **To get a fast decision, you must meet two requirements:**
 - You can get a fast decision only if you are asking for coverage for medical care *you have not yet received*. (You cannot get a fast decision if your request is about payment for medical care you have already received.)
 - You can get a fast decision *only* if using the standard deadlines could *cause serious harm to your health or hurt your ability to function*.
- **If your doctor tells us that your health requires a “fast decision,” we will automatically agree to give you a fast decision.**
- If you ask for a fast decision on your own, without your doctor’s support, we will decide whether your health requires that we give you a fast decision.
 - If we decide that your medical condition does not meet the requirements for a fast decision, we will send you a letter that says so (and we will use the standard deadlines instead).
 - This letter will tell you that if your doctor asks for the fast decision, we will automatically give a fast decision.
 - The letter will also tell how you can file a “fast complaint” about our decision to give you a standard decision instead of the fast decision you requested. (For more information about the process for making complaints, including fast complaints, see Section 9 of this chapter.)

Step 2: We consider your request for medical care coverage and give you our answer.

Deadlines for a “fast” coverage decision

- Generally, for a fast decision, we will give you our answer **within 72 hours**.
 - As explained above, we can take up to 14 more calendar days under certain circumstances. If we decide to take extra days to make the decision, we will tell you in writing.

- If you believe we should *not* take extra days, you can file a “fast complaint” about our decision to take extra days. When you file a fast complaint, we will give you an answer to your complaint within 24 hours. (For more information about the process for making complaints, including fast complaints, see Section 9 of this chapter.)
- If we do not give you our answer within 72 hours (or if there is an extended time period, by the end of that period), you have the right to appeal. Section 5.3 below tells how to make an appeal.
- **If our answer is yes to part or all of what you requested**, we must authorize or provide the medical care coverage we have agreed to provide within 72 hours after we received your request. If we extended the time needed to make our decision, we will provide the coverage by the end of that extended period.
- **If our answer is no to part or all of what you requested**, we will send you a written statement that explains why we said no.

Deadlines for a “standard” coverage decision

- Generally, for a standard decision, we will give you our answer **within 14 days of receiving your request**.
 - We can take up to 14 more calendar days (“an extended time period”) under certain circumstances. If we decide to take extra days to make the decision, we will tell you in writing.
 - If you believe we should *not* take extra days, you can file a “fast complaint” about our decision to take extra days. When you file a fast complaint, we will give you an answer to your complaint within 24 hours. (For more information about the process for making complaints, including fast complaints, see Section 9 of this chapter.)
 - If we do not give you our answer within 14 days (or if there is an extended time period, by the end of that period), you have the right to appeal. Section 5.3 below tells how to make an appeal.
- **If our answer is yes to part or all of what you requested**, we must authorize or provide the coverage we have agreed to provide within 14 days after we received your request. If we extended the time needed to make our decision, we will provide the coverage by the end of that extended period.
- **If our answer is no to part or all of what you requested**, we will send you a written statement that explains why we said no.

Step 3: If we say no to your request for coverage for medical care, you decide if you want to make an appeal.

- If we say no, you have the right to ask us to reconsider – and perhaps change – this decision by making an appeal. Making an appeal means making another try to get the medical care coverage you want.
- If you decide to make an appeal, it means you are going on to Level 1 of the appeals process (see Section 5.3 below).

Section 5.3

Step-by-step: How to make a Level 1 Appeal

(how to ask for a review of a medical care coverage decision made by us)

Legal

Terms

An appeal to us about a medical care coverage decision is called a plan “**reconsideration.**”

Step 1: You contact us and make your appeal. If your health requires a quick response, you must ask for a “**fast appeal.**”

What to do

- **To start an appeal you, your doctor, or your representative must contact us.** For details on how to reach us for any purpose related to your appeal, go to Chapter 2, Section 1 look for section called, *How to contact us when you are making an appeal about your medical care.*
- **If you are asking for a standard appeal, make your standard appeal in writing by submitting a signed request.**
 - If you have someone appealing our decision for you other than your doctor, your appeal must include an Appointment of Representative form authorizing this person to represent you. (To get the form, call Member Services and ask for the “Appointment of Representative” form. It is also available on Medicare’s website at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/cmsforms/downloads/cms1696.pdf>.) While we can accept an appeal request without the form, we cannot complete our review until we receive it. If we do not receive the form within 44 days after receiving your appeal request (our deadline for making a decision on your appeal), your appeal request will be sent to the Independent Review Organization for dismissal.
- **If you are asking for a fast appeal, make your appeal in writing or call us at the phone number shown in Chapter 2, Section 1** (*How to contact us when you are making an appeal about your medical care*).

- **You must make your appeal request within 60 calendar days** from the date on the written notice we sent to tell you our answer to your request for a coverage decision. If you miss this deadline and have a good reason for missing it, we may give you more time to make your appeal. Examples of good cause for missing the deadline may include if you had a serious illness that prevented you from contacting us or if we provided you with incorrect or incomplete information about the deadline for requesting an appeal.
- **You can ask for a copy of the information regarding your medical decision and add more information to support your appeal.**
 - You have the right to ask us for a copy of the information regarding your appeal. We are allowed to charge a fee for copying and sending this information to you.
 - If you wish, you and your doctor may give us additional information to support your appeal.

If your health requires it, ask for a “fast appeal” (you can make a request by calling us)

Legal Terms	A “fast appeal” is also called an “ expedited reconsideration. ”
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- If you are appealing a decision we made about coverage for care you have not yet received, you and/or your doctor will need to decide if you need a “fast appeal.”
- The requirements and procedures for getting a “fast appeal” are the same as those for getting a “fast decision.” To ask for a fast appeal, follow the instructions for asking for a fast decision. (These instructions are given earlier in this section.)
- If your doctor tells us that your health requires a "fast appeal," we will give you a fast appeal.

Step 2: We consider your appeal and we give you our answer.

- When we are reviewing your appeal, we take another careful look at all of the information about your request for coverage of medical care. We check to see if we were following all the rules when we said no to your request.
- We will gather more information if we need it. We may contact you or your doctor to get more information.

Deadlines for a “fast” appeal

- When we are using the fast deadlines, we must give you our answer **within 72 hours after we receive your appeal**. We will give you our answer sooner if your health requires us to do so.
 - However, if you ask for more time, or if we need to gather more information that may benefit you, we **can take up to 14 more calendar days**. If we decide to take extra days to make the decision, we will tell you in writing.
 - If we do not give you an answer within 72 hours (or by the end of the extended time period if we took extra days), we are required to automatically send your request on to Level 2 of the appeals process, where it will be reviewed by an independent organization. Later in this section, we tell you about this organization and explain what happens at Level 2 of the appeals process.
- **If our answer is yes to part or all of what you requested**, we must authorize or provide the coverage we have agreed to provide within 72 hours after we receive your appeal.
- **If our answer is no to part or all of what you requested**, we will send you a written denial notice informing you that we have automatically sent your appeal to the Independent Review Organization for a Level 2 Appeal.

Deadlines for a “standard” appeal

- If we are using the standard deadlines, we must give you our answer **within 30 calendar days** after we receive your appeal if your appeal is about coverage for services you have not yet received. We will give you our decision sooner if your health condition requires us to.
 - However, if you ask for more time, or if we need to gather more information that may benefit you, **we can take up to 14 more calendar days**.
 - If you believe we should *not* take extra days, you can file a “fast complaint” about our decision to take extra days. When you file a fast complaint, we will give you an answer to your complaint within 24 hours. (For more information about the process for making complaints, including fast complaints, see Section 9 of this chapter.)
 - If we do not give you an answer by the deadline above, we are required to send your request on to Level 2 of the appeals process, where it will be reviewed by an independent outside organization. Later in this section, we tell about this review organization and explain what happens at Level 2 of the appeals process.
- **If our answer is yes to part or all of what you requested**, we must authorize or provide the coverage we have agreed to provide within 30 days after we receive your appeal.

- **If our answer is no to part or all of what you requested**, we will send you a written denial notice informing you that we have automatically sent your appeal to the Independent Review Organization for a Level 2 Appeal.

Step 3: If we say no to part or all of your appeal, your case will *automatically* be sent on to the next level of the appeals process.

- To make sure we were following all the rules when we said no to your appeal, **we are required to send your appeal to the “Independent Review Organization.”** When we do this, it means that your appeal is going on to the next level of the appeals process, which is Level 2.

Section 5.4 Step-by-step: How to make a Level 2 Appeal

If we say no to your Level 1 Appeal, your case will *automatically* be sent on to the next level of the appeals process. During the Level 2 Appeal, the **Independent Review Organization** reviews the decision we made when we said no to your first appeal. This organization decides whether the decision we made should be changed.

Legal Terms	The formal name for the “Independent Review Organization” is the “ Independent Review Entity. ” It is sometimes called the “ IRE. ”
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Step 1: The Independent Review Organization reviews your appeal.

- **The Independent Review Organization is an independent organization that is hired by Medicare.** This organization is not connected with us and it is not a government agency. This organization is a company chosen by Medicare to handle the job of being the Independent Review Organization. Medicare oversees its work.
- We will send the information about your appeal to this organization. This information is called your “case file.” **You have the right to ask us for a copy of your case file.** We are allowed to charge you a fee for copying and sending this information to you.
- You have a right to give the Independent Review Organization additional information to support your appeal.
- Reviewers at the Independent Review Organization will take a careful look at all of the information related to your appeal.

If you had a “fast” appeal at Level 1, you will also have a “fast” appeal at Level 2

- If you had a fast appeal to us at Level 1, you will automatically receive a fast appeal at Level 2. The review organization must give you an answer to your Level 2 Appeal **within 72 hours** of when it receives your appeal.
- However, if the Independent Review Organization needs to gather more information that may benefit you, **it can take up to 14 more calendar days.**

*If you had a “standard” appeal at Level 1, you will also have a **“standard” appeal at Level 2***

- If you had a standard appeal to us at Level 1, you will automatically receive a standard appeal at Level 2. The review organization must give you an answer to your Level 2 Appeal **within 30 calendar days** of when it receives your appeal.
- However, if the Independent Review Organization needs to gather more information that may benefit you, **it can take up to 14 more calendar days.**

Step 2: The Independent Review Organization gives you its answer.

The Independent Review Organization will tell you its decision in writing and explain the reasons for it.

- **If the review organization says yes to part or all of what you requested**, we must authorize the medical care coverage within 72 hours or provide the service within 14 calendar days after we receive the decision from the review organization.
- **If this organization says no to part or all of your appeal**, it means they agree with us that your request (or part of your request) for coverage for medical care should not be approved. (This is called “upholding the decision.” It is also called “turning down your appeal.”)
 - The written notice you get from the Independent Review Organization will tell you the dollar value that must be in dispute to continue with the appeals process. For example, to continue and make another appeal at Level 3, the dollar value of the medical care coverage you are requesting must meet a certain minimum. If the dollar value of the coverage you are requesting is too low, you cannot make another appeal, which means that the decision at Level 2 is final.

Step 3: If your case meets the requirements, you choose whether you want to take your appeal further.

- There are three additional levels in the appeals process after Level 2 (for a total of five levels of appeal).
- If your Level 2 Appeal is turned down and you meet the requirements to continue with the appeals process, you must decide whether you want to go on to Level 3 and make a third appeal. The details on how to do this are in the written notice you got after your Level 2 Appeal.
- The Level 3 Appeal is handled by an administrative law judge. Section 8 in this chapter tells more about Levels 3, 4, and 5 of the appeals process.

Section 5.5	What if you are asking us to pay you for our share of a bill you have received for medical care?
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If you want to ask us for payment for medical care, start by reading Chapter 5 of this booklet: *Asking us to pay our share of a bill you have received for covered medical services*. Chapter 5 describes the situations in which you may need to ask for reimbursement or to pay a bill you have received from a provider. It also tells how to send us the paperwork that asks us for payment.

Asking for reimbursement is asking for a coverage decision from us

If you send us the paperwork that asks for reimbursement, you are asking us to make a coverage decision (for more information about coverage decisions, see Section 4.1 of this chapter). To make this coverage decision, we will check to see if the medical care you paid for is a covered service (see Chapter 4: *Medical Benefits Chart (what is covered and what you pay)*). We will also check to see if you followed all the rules for using your coverage for medical care (these rules are given in Chapter 3 of this booklet: *Using the plan's coverage for your medical services*).

We will say yes or no to your request

- If the medical care you paid for is covered and you followed all the rules, we will send you the payment for our share of the cost of your medical care within 60 calendar days after we receive your request. Or, if you haven't paid for the services, we will send the payment directly to the provider. When we send the payment, it's the same as saying *yes* to your request for a coverage decision.)
- If the medical care is *not* covered, or you did *not* follow all the rules, we will not send payment. Instead, we will send you a letter that says we will not pay for the services and the reasons why. (When we turn down your request for payment, it's the same as saying *no* to your request for a coverage decision.)

What if you ask for payment and we say that we will not pay?

If you do not agree with our decision to turn you down, **you can make an appeal**. If you make an appeal, it means you are asking us to change the coverage decision we made when we turned down your request for payment.

To make this appeal, follow the process for appeals that we describe in part 5.3 of this section. Go to this part for step-by-step instructions. When you are following these instructions, please note:

- If you make an appeal for reimbursement, we must give you our answer within 60 calendar days after we receive your appeal. (If you are asking us to pay you back for medical care you have already received and paid for yourself, you are not allowed to ask for a fast appeal.)

- If the Independent Review Organization reverses our decision to deny payment, we must send the payment you have requested to you or to the provider within 30 calendar days. If the answer to your appeal is yes at any stage of the appeals process after Level 2, we must send the payment you requested to you or to the provider within 60 calendar days.

SECTION 6 How to ask us to cover a longer inpatient hospital stay if you think the doctor is discharging you too soon

When you are admitted to a hospital, you have the right to get all of your covered hospital services that are necessary to diagnose and treat your illness or injury. For more information about our coverage for your hospital care, including any limitations on this coverage, see Chapter 4 of this booklet: *Medical Benefits Chart (what is covered and what you pay)*.

During your hospital stay, your doctor and the hospital staff will be working with you to prepare for the day when you will leave the hospital. They will also help arrange for care you may need after you leave.

- The day you leave the hospital is called your “**discharge date.**” Our plan’s coverage of your hospital stay ends on this date.
- When your discharge date has been decided, your doctor or the hospital staff will let you know.
- If you think you are being asked to leave the hospital too soon, you can ask for a longer hospital stay and your request will be considered. This section tells you how to ask.

Section 6.1 During your inpatient hospital stay, you will get a written notice from Medicare that tells about your rights

During your hospital stay, you will be given a written notice called *An Important Message from Medicare about Your Rights*. Everyone with Medicare gets a copy of this notice whenever they are admitted to a hospital. Someone at the hospital (for example, a caseworker or nurse) must give it to you within two days after you are admitted. If you do not get the notice, ask any hospital employee for it. If you need help, please call Member Services. You can also call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227), 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.

- 1. Read this notice carefully and ask questions if you don’t understand it.** It tells you about your rights as a hospital patient, including:
 - Your right to receive Medicare-covered services during and after your hospital stay, as ordered by your doctor. This includes the right to know what these services are, who will pay for them, and where you can get them.

- Your right to be involved in any decisions about your hospital stay, and know who will pay for it.
- Where to report any concerns you have about quality of your hospital care.
- Your right to appeal your discharge decision if you think you are being discharged from the hospital too soon.

**Legal
Terms**

The written notice from Medicare tells you how you can “**request an immediate review.**” Requesting an immediate review is a formal, legal way to ask for a delay in your discharge date so that we will cover your hospital care for a longer time. (Section 6.2 below tells you how you can request an immediate review.)

2. You must sign the written notice to show that you received it and understand your rights.

- You or someone who is acting on your behalf must sign the notice. (Section 4 of this chapter tells how you can give written permission to someone else to act as your representative.)
- Signing the notice shows *only* that you have received the information about your rights. The notice does not give your discharge date (your doctor or hospital staff will tell you your discharge date). Signing the notice **does not mean** you are agreeing on a discharge date.

3. Keep your copy of the signed notice so you will have the information about making an appeal (or reporting a concern about quality of care) handy if you need it.

- If you sign the notice more than 2 days before the day you leave the hospital, you will get another copy before you are scheduled to be discharged.
- To look at a copy of this notice in advance, you can call Member Services or 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227), 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048. You can also see it online at http://www.cms.gov/BNI/12_HospitalDischargeAppealNotices.asp.

Section 6.2

Step-by-step: How to make a Level 1 Appeal to change your hospital discharge date

If you want to ask for your hospital services to be covered by us for a longer time, you will need to use the appeals process to make this request. Before you start, understand what you need to do and what the deadlines are.

- **Follow the process.** Each step in the first two levels of the appeals process is explained below.

- **Meet the deadlines.** The deadlines are important. Be sure that you understand and follow the deadlines that apply to things you must do.
- **Ask for help if you need it.** If you have questions or need help at any time, please call Member Services (phone numbers are on the back cover of this booklet). Or call your State Health Insurance Assistance Program, a government organization that provides personalized assistance (see Section 2 of this chapter).

During a Level 1 Appeal, the Quality Improvement Organization reviews your appeal. It checks to see if your planned discharge date is medically appropriate for you.

Step 1: Contact the Quality Improvement Organization in your state and ask for a “fast review” of your hospital discharge. You must act quickly.

Legal Terms	A “fast review” is also called an “ immediate review. ”
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What is the Quality Improvement Organization?

- This organization is a group of doctors and other health care professionals who are paid by the Federal government. These experts are not part of our plan. This organization is paid by Medicare to check on and help improve the quality of care for people with Medicare. This includes reviewing hospital discharge dates for people with Medicare.

How can you contact this organization?

- The written notice you received (*An Important Message from Medicare About Your Rights*) tells you how to reach this organization. (Or find the name, address, and phone number of the Quality Improvement Organization for your state in Chapter 2, Section 4, of this booklet.)

Act quickly:

- To make your appeal, you must contact the Quality Improvement Organization *before* you leave the hospital and **no later than your planned discharge date.** (Your “planned discharge date” is the date that has been set for you to leave the hospital.)
 - If you meet this deadline, you are allowed to stay in the hospital *after* your discharge date *without paying for it* while you wait to get the decision on your appeal from the Quality Improvement Organization.
 - If you do *not* meet this deadline, and you decide to stay in the hospital after your planned discharge date, *you may have to pay all of the costs* for hospital care you receive after your planned discharge date.
- If you miss the deadline for contacting the Quality Improvement Organization about your appeal, you can make your appeal directly to us instead. For details about this other way to make your appeal, see Section 6.4.

Ask for a “fast review”:

- You must ask the Quality Improvement Organization for a **“fast review”** of your discharge. Asking for a “fast review” means you are asking for the organization to use the “fast” deadlines for an appeal instead of using the standard deadlines.

Legal Terms	A “fast review” is also called an “immediate review” or an “expedited review.”
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Step 2: The Quality Improvement Organization conducts an independent review of your case.*What happens during this review?*

- Health professionals at the Quality Improvement Organization (we will call them “the reviewers” for short) will ask you (or your representative) why you believe coverage for the services should continue. You don’t have to prepare anything in writing, but you may do so if you wish.
- The reviewers will also look at your medical information, talk with your doctor, and review information that the hospital and we have given to them.
- By noon of the day after the reviewers informed us of your appeal, you will also get a written notice that gives your planned discharge date and explains the reasons why your doctor, the hospital, and we think it is right (medically appropriate) for you to be discharged on that date.

Legal Terms	This written explanation is called the “Detailed Notice of Discharge.” You can get a sample of this notice by calling Member Services or 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227), 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. (TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.) Or you can get see a sample notice online at http://www.cms.hhs.gov/BNI/
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Step 3: Within one full day after it has all the needed information, the Quality Improvement Organization will give you its answer to your appeal.*What happens if the answer is yes?*

- If the review organization says *yes* to your appeal, **we must keep providing your covered hospital services for as long as these services are medically necessary.**
- You will have to keep paying your share of the costs (such as deductibles or copayments, if these apply). In addition, there may be limitations on your covered hospital services. (See Chapter 4 of this booklet).

What happens if the answer is no?

- If the review organization says *no* to your appeal, they are saying that your planned discharge date is medically appropriate. If this happens, **our coverage for your hospital services will end** at noon on the day *after* the Quality Improvement Organization gives you its answer to your appeal.
- If the review organization says *no* to your appeal and you decide to stay in the hospital, then **you may have to pay the full cost** of hospital care you receive after noon on the day after the Quality Improvement Organization gives you its answer to your appeal.

Step 4: If the answer to your Level 1 Appeal is no, you decide if you want to make another appeal.

- If the Quality Improvement Organization has turned down your appeal, *and* you stay in the hospital after your planned discharge date, then you can make another appeal. Making another appeal means you are going on to “Level 2” of the appeals process.

Section 6.3	Step-by-step: How to make a Level 2 Appeal to change your hospital discharge date
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If the Quality Improvement Organization has turned down your appeal, *and* you stay in the hospital after your planned discharge date, then you can make a Level 2 Appeal. During a Level 2 Appeal, you ask the Quality Improvement Organization to take another look at the decision they made on your first appeal. If we turn down your Level 2 Appeal, you may have to pay the full cost for your stay after your planned discharge date.

Here are the steps for Level 2 of the appeal process:

Step 1: You contact the Quality Improvement Organization again and ask for another review.

- You must ask for this review **within 60 calendar days** after the day when the Quality Improvement Organization said *no* to your Level 1 Appeal. You can ask for this review only if you stayed in the hospital after the date that your coverage for the care ended.

Step 2: The Quality Improvement Organization does a second review of your situation.

- Reviewers at the Quality Improvement Organization will take another careful look at all of the information related to your appeal.

Step 3: Within 14 calendar days, the Quality Improvement Organization reviewers will decide on your appeal and tell you their decision.

If the review organization says yes:

- **We must reimburse you** for our share of the costs of hospital care you have received since noon on the day after the date your first appeal was turned down by the Quality Improvement Organization. **We must continue providing coverage for your hospital care for as long as it is medically necessary.**
- You must continue to pay your share of the costs and coverage limitations may apply.

If the review organization says no:

- It means they agree with the decision they made on your Level 1 Appeal and will not change it.
- The notice you get will tell you in writing what you can do if you wish to continue with the review process. It will give you the details about how to go on to the next level of appeal, which is handled by a judge.

Step 4: If the answer is no, you will need to decide whether you want to take your appeal further by going on to Level 3.

- There are three additional levels in the appeals process after Level 2 (for a total of five levels of appeal). If the review organization turns down your Level 2 Appeal, you can choose whether to accept that decision or whether to go on to Level 3 and make another appeal. At Level 3, your appeal is reviewed by a judge.
- Section 8 in this chapter tells more about Levels 3, 4, and 5 of the appeals process.

Section 6.4	What if you miss the deadline for making your Level 1 Appeal?
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You can appeal to us instead

As explained above in Section 6.2, you must act quickly to contact the Quality Improvement Organization to start your first appeal of your hospital discharge. (“Quickly” means before you leave the hospital and no later than your planned discharge date). If you miss the deadline for contacting this organization, there is another way to make your appeal.

If you use this other way of making your appeal, *the first two levels of appeal are different.*

Step-by-Step: How to make a Level 1 *Alternate Appeal*

If you miss the deadline for contacting the Quality Improvement Organization, you can make an appeal to us, asking for a “fast review.” A fast review is an appeal that uses the fast deadlines instead of the standard deadlines.

Legal Terms	A “fast” review (or “fast appeal”) is also called an “ expedited appeal. ”
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Step 1: Contact us and ask for a “fast review.”

- For details on how to contact us, go to Chapter 2, Section 1 and look for the section called, *How to contact us when you are making an appeal about your medical care.*
- **Be sure to ask for a “fast review.”** This means you are asking us to give you an answer using the “fast” deadlines rather than the “standard” deadlines.

Step 2: We do a “fast” review of your planned discharge date, checking to see if it was medically appropriate.

- During this review, we take a look at all of the information about your hospital stay. We check to see if your planned discharge date was medically appropriate. We will check to see if the decision about when you should leave the hospital was fair and followed all the rules.
- In this situation, we will use the “fast” deadlines rather than the standard deadlines for giving you the answer to this review.

Step 3: We give you our decision within 72 hours after you ask for a “fast review” (“fast appeal”).

- **If we say yes to your fast appeal,** it means we have agreed with you that you still need to be in the hospital after the discharge date, and will keep providing your covered services for as long as it is medically necessary. It also means that we have agreed to reimburse you for our share of the costs of care you have received since the date when we said your coverage would end. (You must pay your share of the costs and there may be coverage limitations that apply.)
- **If we say no to your fast appeal,** we are saying that your planned discharge date was medically appropriate. Our coverage for your hospital services ends as of the day we said coverage would end.
- If you stayed in the hospital *after* your planned discharge date, then **you may have to pay the full cost** of hospital care you received after the planned discharge date.

Step 4: If we say *no* to your fast appeal, your case will *automatically* be sent on to the next level of the appeals process.

- To make sure we were following all the rules when we said no to your fast appeal, **we are required to send your appeal to the “Independent Review Organization.”** When we do this, it means that you are *automatically* going on to Level 2 of the appeals process.

Step-by-Step: How to make a Level 2 *Alternate* Appeal

If we say no to your Level 1 Appeal, your case will *automatically* be sent on to the next level of the appeals process. During the Level 2 Appeal, the **Independent Review Organization** reviews the decision we made when we said no to your “fast appeal.” This organization decides whether the decision we made should be changed.

Legal Terms	The formal name for the “Independent Review Organization” is the “ Independent Review Entity. ” It is sometimes called the “ IRE. ”
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Step 1: We will automatically forward your case to the Independent Review Organization.

- We are required to send the information for your Level 2 Appeal to the Independent Review Organization within 24 hours of when we tell you that we are saying no to your first appeal. (If you think we are not meeting this deadline or other deadlines, you can make a complaint. The complaint process is different from the appeal process. Section 9 of this chapter tells how to make a complaint.)

Step 2: The Independent Review Organization does a “fast review” of your appeal. The reviewers give you an answer within 72 hours.

- **The Independent Review Organization is an independent organization that is hired by Medicare.** This organization is not connected with our plan and it is not a government agency. This organization is a company chosen by Medicare to handle the job of being the Independent Review Organization. Medicare oversees its work.
- Reviewers at the Independent Review Organization will take a careful look at all of the information related to your appeal of your hospital discharge.
- **If this organization says *yes* to your appeal,** then we must reimburse you (pay you back) for our share of the costs of hospital care you have received since the date of your planned discharge. We must also continue the plan’s coverage of your hospital services for as long as it is medically necessary. You must continue to pay your share of the costs. If there are coverage limitations, these could limit how much we would reimburse or how long we would continue to cover your services.

- **If this organization says *no* to your appeal**, it means they agree with us that your planned hospital discharge date was medically appropriate.
 - The notice you get from the Independent Review Organization will tell you in writing what you can do if you wish to continue with the review process. It will give you the details about how to go on to a Level 3 Appeal, which is handled by a judge.

Step 3: If the Independent Review Organization turns down your appeal, you choose whether you want to take your appeal further.

- There are three additional levels in the appeals process after Level 2 (for a total of five levels of appeal). If reviewers say no to your Level 2 Appeal, you decide whether to accept their decision or go on to Level 3 and make a third appeal.
- Section 8 in this chapter tells more about Levels 3, 4, and 5 of the appeals process.

SECTION 7 How to ask us to keep covering certain medical services if you think your coverage is ending too soon

Section 7.1	<i>This section is about three services <u>only</u>: Home health care, skilled nursing facility care, and Comprehensive Outpatient Rehabilitation Facility (CORF) services</i>
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This section is about the following types of care *only*:

- **Home health care services** you are getting.
- **Skilled nursing care** you are getting as a patient in a skilled nursing facility. (To learn about requirements for being considered a “skilled nursing facility,” see Chapter 10, *Definitions of important words*.)
- **Rehabilitation care** you are getting as an outpatient at a Medicare-approved Comprehensive Outpatient Rehabilitation Facility (CORF). Usually, this means you are getting treatment for an illness or accident, or you are recovering from a major operation. (For more information about this type of facility, see Chapter 10, *Definitions of important words*.)

When you are getting any of these types of care, you have the right to keep getting your covered services for that type of care for as long as the care is needed to diagnose and treat your illness or injury. For more information on your covered services, including your share of the cost and any limitations to coverage that may apply, see Chapter 4 of this booklet: *Medical Benefits Chart (what is covered and what you pay)*.

When we decide it is time to stop covering any of the three types of care for you, we are required to tell you in advance. When your coverage for that care ends, *we will stop paying our share of the cost for your care.*

If you think we are ending the coverage of your care too soon, **you can appeal our decision.** This section tells you how to ask for an appeal.

Section 7.2	We will tell you in advance when your coverage will be ending
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1. You receive a notice in writing. At least two days before our plan is going to stop covering your care, the agency or facility that is providing your care will give you a notice.

- The written notice tells you the date when we will stop covering the care for you.
- The written notice also tells what you can do if you want to ask us to change this decision about when to end your care, and keep covering it for a longer period of time.

Legal Terms	In telling you what you can do, the written notice is telling how you can request a “fast-track appeal.” Requesting a fast-track appeal is a formal, legal way to request a change to our coverage decision about when to stop your care. (Section 7.3 below tells how you can request a fast-track appeal.)
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Legal Terms	The written notice is called the “Notice of Medicare Non-Coverage.” To get a sample copy, call Member Services or 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.). Or see a copy online at http://www.cms.hhs.gov/BNI/
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2. You must sign the written notice to show that you received it.

- You or someone who is acting on your behalf must sign the notice. (Section 4 tells how you can give written permission to someone else to act as your representative.)
- Signing the notice shows *only* that you have received the information about when your coverage will stop. **Signing it does not mean you agree** with us that it’s time to stop getting the care.

Section 7.3	Step-by-step: How to make a Level 1 Appeal to have our plan cover your care for a longer time
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If you want to ask us to cover your care for a longer period of time, you will need to use the appeals process to make this request. Before you start, understand what you need to do and what the deadlines are.

- **Follow the process.** Each step in the first two levels of the appeals process is explained below.
- **Meet the deadlines.** The deadlines are important. Be sure that you understand and follow the deadlines that apply to things you must do. There are also deadlines we must follow. (If you think we are not meeting our deadlines, you can file a complaint. Section 9 of this chapter tells you how to file a complaint.)
- **Ask for help if you need it.** If you have questions or need help at any time, please call Member Services (phone numbers are on the back cover of this booklet). Or call your State Health Insurance Assistance Program, a government organization that provides personalized assistance (see Section 2 of this chapter).

During a Level 1 Appeal, the Quality Improvement Organization reviews your appeal and decides whether to change the decision made by us.

Step 1: Make your Level 1 Appeal: contact the Quality Improvement Organization in your state and ask for a review. You must act quickly.

What is the Quality Improvement Organization?

- This organization is a group of doctors and other health care experts who are paid by the Federal government. These experts are not part of our plan. They check on the quality of care received by people with Medicare and review plan decisions about when it's time to stop covering certain kinds of medical care.

How can you contact this organization?

- The written notice you received tells you how to reach this organization. (Or find the name, address, and phone number of the Quality Improvement Organization for your state in Chapter 2, Section 4, of this booklet.)

What should you ask for?

- Ask this organization to do an independent review of whether it is medically appropriate for us to end coverage for your medical services.

Your deadline for contacting this organization.

- You must contact the Quality Improvement Organization to start your appeal *no later than noon of the day after you receive the written notice telling you when we will stop covering your care.*

- If you miss the deadline for contacting the Quality Improvement Organization about your appeal, you can make your appeal directly to us instead. For details about this other way to make your appeal, see Section 7.5.

Step 2: The Quality Improvement Organization conducts an independent review of your case.

What happens during this review?

- Health professionals at the Quality Improvement Organization (we will call them “the reviewers” for short) will ask you (or your representative) why you believe coverage for the services should continue. You don’t have to prepare anything in writing, but you may do so if you wish.
- The review organization will also look at your medical information, talk with your doctor, and review information that we have given to them.
- By the end of the day the reviewers informed us of your appeal, and you will also get a written notice from us that gives our reasons for ending our coverage for your services.

Legal Terms	This notice explanation is called the “ Detailed Explanation of Non-Coverage. ”
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Step 3: Within one full day after they have all the information they need, the reviewers will tell you their decision.

What happens if the reviewers say yes to your appeal?

- If the reviewers say *yes* to your appeal, then **we must keep providing your covered services for as long as it is medically necessary.**
- You will have to keep paying your share of the costs (such as deductibles or copayments, if these apply). In addition, there may be limitations on your covered services (see Chapter 4 of this booklet).

What happens if the reviewers say no to your appeal?

- If the reviewers say *no* to your appeal, then **your coverage will end on the date we have told you.** We will stop paying our share of the costs of this care.
- If you decide to keep getting the home health care, or skilled nursing facility care, or Comprehensive Outpatient Rehabilitation Facility (CORF) services *after* this date when your coverage ends, then **you will have to pay the full cost** of this care yourself.

Step 4: If the answer to your Level 1 Appeal is no, you decide if you want to make another appeal.

- This first appeal you make is “Level 1” of the appeals process. If reviewers say *no* to your Level 1 Appeal – and you choose to continue getting care after your coverage for the care has ended – then you can make another appeal.
- Making another appeal means you are going on to “Level 2” of the appeals process.

Section 7.4	Step-by-step: How to make a Level 2 Appeal to have our plan cover your care for a longer time
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If the Quality Improvement Organization has turned down your appeal and you choose to continue getting care after your coverage for the care has ended, then you can make a Level 2 Appeal. During a Level 2 Appeal, you ask the Quality Improvement Organization to take another look at the decision they made on your first appeal. If we turn down your Level 2 Appeal, you may have to pay the full cost for your home health care, or skilled nursing facility care, or Comprehensive Outpatient Rehabilitation Facility (CORF) services *after* the date when we said your coverage would end

Here are the steps for Level 2 of the appeal process:

Step 1: You contact the Quality Improvement Organization again and ask for another review.

- You must ask for this review **within 60 days** after the day when the Quality Improvement Organization said *no* to your Level 1 Appeal. You can ask for this review only if you continued getting care after the date that your coverage for the care ended.

Step 2: The Quality Improvement Organization does a second review of your situation.

- Reviewers at the Quality Improvement Organization will take another careful look at all of the information related to your appeal.

Step 3: Within 14 days, the Quality Improvement Organization reviewers will decide on your appeal and tell you their decision.

What happens if the review organization says yes to your appeal?

- **We must reimburse you** for our share of the costs of care you have received since the date when we said your coverage would end. **We must continue providing coverage** for the care for as long as it is medically necessary.
- You must continue to pay your share of the costs and there may be coverage limitations that apply.

What happens if the review organization says no?

- It means they agree with the decision we made to your Level 1 Appeal and will not change it.
- The notice you get will tell you in writing what you can do if you wish to continue with the review process. It will give you the details about how to go on to the next level of appeal, which is handled by a judge.

Step 4: If the answer is no, you will need to decide whether you want to take your appeal further.

- There are three additional levels of appeal after Level 2, for a total of five levels of appeal. If reviewers turn down your Level 2 Appeal, you can choose whether to accept that decision or to go on to Level 3 and make another appeal. At Level 3, your appeal is reviewed by a judge.
- Section 8 in this chapter tells more about Levels 3, 4, and 5 of the appeals process.

Section 7.5 What if you miss the deadline for making your Level 1 Appeal?**You can appeal to us instead**

As explained above in Section 7.3, you must act quickly to contact the Quality Improvement Organization to start your first appeal (within a day or two, at the most). If you miss the deadline for contacting this organization, there is another way to make your appeal. If you use this other way of making your appeal, *the first two levels of appeal are different.*

Step-by-Step: How to make a Level 1 Alternate Appeal

If you miss the deadline for contacting the Quality Improvement Organization, you can make an appeal to us, asking for a “fast review.” A fast review is an appeal that uses the fast deadlines instead of the standard deadlines.

Here are the steps for a Level 1 Alternate Appeal:

Legal Terms A “fast” review (or “fast appeal”) is also called an “**expedited appeal.**”

Step 1: Contact us and ask for a “fast review.”

- For details on how to contact us, go to Chapter 2, Section 1 and look for the section called, *How to contact us when you are making an appeal about your medical care.*
- **Be sure to ask for a “fast review.”** This means you are asking us to give you an answer using the “fast” deadlines rather than the “standard” deadlines.

Step 2: We do a “fast” review of the decision we made about when to end coverage for your services.

- During this review, we take another look at all of the information about your case. We check to see if we were following all the rules when we set the date for ending the plan’s coverage for services you were receiving.
- We will use the “fast” deadlines rather than the standard deadlines for giving you the answer to this review. (Usually, if you make an appeal to us and ask for a “fast review,” we are allowed to decide whether to agree to your request and give you a “fast review.” But in this situation, the rules require us to give you a fast response if you ask for it.)

Step 3: We give you our decision within 72 hours after you ask for a “fast review” (“fast appeal”).

- **If we say yes to your fast appeal,** it means we have agreed with you that you need services longer, and will keep providing your covered services for as long as it is medically necessary. It also means that we have agreed to reimburse you for our share of the costs of care you have received since the date when we said your coverage would end. (You must pay your share of the costs and there may be coverage limitations that apply.)
- **If we say no to your fast appeal,** then your coverage will end on the date we have told you and we will not pay after this date. We will stop paying its share of the costs of this care.
- If you continued to get home health care, or skilled nursing facility care, or Comprehensive Outpatient Rehabilitation Facility (CORF) services *after* the date when we said your coverage would end, then **you will have to pay the full cost** of this care yourself.

Step 4: If we say *no* to your fast appeal, your case will *automatically* go on to the next level of the appeals process.

- To make sure we were following all the rules when we said no to your fast appeal, **we are required to send your appeal to the “Independent Review Organization.”** When we do this, it means that you are *automatically* going on to Level 2 of the appeals process.

Step-by-Step: How to make a Level 2 *Alternate Appeal*

If we say no to your Level 1 Appeal, your case will *automatically* be sent on to the next level of the appeals process. During the Level 2 Appeal, the **Independent Review Organization** reviews the decision we made when we said no to your “fast appeal.” This organization decides whether the decision we made should be changed.

Legal Terms	The formal name for the “Independent Review Organization” is the “ Independent Review Entity. ” It is sometimes called the “ IRE. ”
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Step 1: We will automatically forward your case to the Independent Review Organization.

- We are required to send the information for your Level 2 Appeal to the Independent Review Organization within 24 hours of when we tell you that we are saying no to your first appeal. (If you think we are not meeting this deadline or other deadlines, you can make a complaint. The complaint process is different from the appeal process. Section 9 of this chapter tells how to make a complaint.)

Step 2: The Independent Review Organization does a “fast review” of your appeal. The reviewers give you an answer within 72 hours.

- **The Independent Review Organization is an independent organization that is hired by Medicare.** This organization is not connected with our plan and it is not a government agency. This organization is a company chosen by Medicare to handle the job of being the Independent Review Organization. Medicare oversees its work.
- Reviewers at the Independent Review Organization will take a careful look at all of the information related to your appeal.
- **If this organization says *yes* to your appeal,** then we must reimburse you (pay you back) for our share of the costs of care you have received since the date when we said your coverage would end. We must also continue to cover the care for as long as it is medically necessary. You must continue to pay your share of the costs. If there are coverage limitations, these could limit how much we would reimburse or how long we would continue to cover your services.
- **If this organization says *no* to your appeal,** it means they agree with the decision we made to your first appeal and will not change it.
 - The notice you get from the Independent Review Organization will tell you in writing what you can do if you wish to continue with the review process. It will give you the details about how to go on to a Level 3 Appeal.

Step 3: If the Independent Review Organization turns down your appeal, you choose whether you want to take your appeal further.

- There are three additional levels of appeal after Level 2, for a total of five levels of appeal. If reviewers say no to your Level 2 Appeal, you can choose whether to accept that decision or whether to go on to Level 3 and make another appeal. At Level 3, your appeal is reviewed by a judge.
- Section 8 in this chapter tells more about Levels 3, 4, and 5 of the appeals process.

SECTION 8 Taking your appeal to Level 3 and beyond

Section 8.1 Levels of Appeal 3, 4, and 5 for Medical Service Appeals

This section may be appropriate for you if you have made a Level 1 Appeal and a Level 2 Appeal, and both of your appeals have been turned down.

If the dollar value of the item or medical service you have appealed meets certain minimum levels, you may be able to go on to additional levels of appeal. If the dollar value is less than the minimum level, you cannot appeal any further. If the dollar value is high enough, the written response you receive to your Level 2 Appeal will explain who to contact and what to do to ask for a Level 3 Appeal.

For most situations that involve appeals, the last three levels of appeal work in much the same way. Here is who handles the review of your appeal at each of these levels.

Level 3 Appeal A judge who works for the Federal government will review your appeal and give you an answer. This judge is called an “Administrative Law Judge.”
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- **If the Administrative Law Judge says yes to your appeal, the appeals process *may* or *may not* be over** - We will decide whether to appeal this decision to Level 4. Unlike a decision at Level 2 (Independent Review Organization), we have the right to appeal a Level 3 decision that is favorable to you.
 - If we decide *not* to appeal the decision, we must authorize or provide you with the service within 60 days after receiving the judge’s decision.
 - If we decide to appeal the decision, we will send you a copy of the Level 4 Appeal request with any accompanying documents. We may wait for the Level 4 Appeal decision before authorizing or providing the service in dispute.

- **If the Administrative Law Judge says no to your appeal, the appeals process *may* or *may not* be over.**
 - If you decide to accept this decision that turns down your appeal, the appeals process is over.
 - If you do not want to accept the decision, you can continue to the next level of the review process. If the administrative law judge says no to your appeal, the notice you get will tell you what to do next if you choose to continue with your appeal.

Level 4 Appeal The **Medicare Appeals Council** will review your appeal and give you an answer. The Medicare Appeals Council works for the Federal government.

- **If the answer is yes, or if the Medicare Appeals Council denies our request to review a favorable Level 3 Appeal decision, the appeals process *may* or *may not* be over -** We will decide whether to appeal this decision to Level 5. Unlike a decision at Level 2 (Independent Review Organization), we have the right to appeal a Level 4 decision that is favorable to you.
 - If we decide *not* to appeal the decision, we must authorize or provide you with the service within 60 days after receiving the Medicare Appeals Council's decision.
 - If we decide to appeal the decision, we will let you know in writing.
- **If the answer is no or if the Medicare Appeals Council denies the review request, the appeals process *may* or *may not* be over.**
 - If you decide to accept this decision that turns down your appeal, the appeals process is over.
 - If you do not want to accept the decision, you might be able to continue to the next level of the review process. If the Medicare Appeals Council says no to your appeal, the notice you get will tell you whether the rules allow you to go on to a Level 5 Appeal. If the rules allow you to go on, the written notice will also tell you who to contact and what to do next if you choose to continue with your appeal.

Level 5 Appeal A judge at the **Federal District Court** will review your appeal.

- This is the last step of the administrative appeals process.

MAKING COMPLAINTS

SECTION 9 How to make a complaint about quality of care, waiting times, customer service, or other concerns

If your problem is about decisions related to benefits, coverage, or payment, then this section is *not for you*. Instead, you need to use the process for coverage decisions and appeals. Go to Section 4 of this chapter.

Section 9.1 What kinds of problems are handled by the complaint process?
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This section explains how to use the process for making complaints. The complaint process is used for certain types of problems *only*. This includes problems related to quality of care, waiting times, and the customer service you receive.

If you have a complaint regarding a service provided by a hospital or skilled nursing facility that is not part of the plan network, follow the complaint process established by Original Medicare. However, if you have a complaint involving a plan network hospital or skilled nursing facility (or you were directed to go to an out-of-network hospital or skilled nursing facility by us or one of the network providers), you will follow the instructions contained in this section. This is true even if you received a Medicare Summary Notice indicating that a claim was processed but not covered by Original Medicare. Furthermore, if you have a complaint regarding an emergency service or urgently needed care, or the cost sharing for hospital or skilled nursing facility services, you will follow the instructions contained in this section. If you have complaints about optional supplemental benefits, you may also file an appeal.

Here are examples of the kinds of problems handled by the complaint process.

If you have any of these kinds of problems, you can “make a complaint”

Quality of your medical care

- Are you unhappy with the quality of the care you have received (including care in the hospital)?

Respecting your privacy

- Do you believe that someone did not respect your right to privacy or shared information about you that you feel should be confidential?

Disrespect, poor customer service, or other negative behaviors

- Has someone been rude or disrespectful to you?
- Are you unhappy with how our Member Services has treated you?
- Do you feel you are being encouraged to leave the plan?

Waiting times

- Are you having trouble getting an appointment, or waiting too long to get it?
- Have you been kept waiting too long by doctors, or other health professionals? Or by our Member Services or other staff at the plan?
 - Examples include waiting too long on the phone, in the waiting room or in the exam room.

Cleanliness

- Are you unhappy with the cleanliness or condition of a clinic, hospital, or doctor’s office?

Information you get from us

- Do you believe we have not given you a notice that we are required to give?
- Do you think written information we have given you is hard to understand?

The next page has more examples of possible reasons for making a complaint

Possible complaints

(continued)

These types of complaints are all related to the *timeliness* of our actions related to coverage decisions and appeals

The process of asking for a coverage decision and making appeals is explained in sections 4-8 of this chapter. If you are asking for a decision or making an appeal, you use that process, not the complaint process.

However, if you have already asked us for a coverage decision or made an appeal, and you think that we are not responding quickly enough, you can also make a complaint about our slowness. Here are some examples:

- If you have asked us to give you a “fast response” for a coverage decision or appeal, and we have said we will not, you can make a complaint.
- If you believe we are not meeting the deadlines for giving you a coverage decision or an answer to an appeal you have made, you can make a complaint.
- When a coverage decision we made is reviewed and we are told that we must cover or reimburse you for certain medical services, there are deadlines that apply. If you think we are not meeting these deadlines, you can make a complaint.
- When we do not give you a decision on time, we are required to forward your case to the Independent Review Organization. If we do not do that within the required deadline, you can make a complaint.

Section 9.2

The formal name for “making a complaint” is “filing a grievance”

Legal Terms

- What this section calls a “**complaint**” is also called a “**grievance.**”
- Another term for “**making a complaint**” is “**filing a grievance.**”
- Another way to say “**using the process for complaints**” is “**using the process for filing a grievance.**”

Section 9.3 Step-by-step: Making a complaint

Step 1: Contact us promptly – either by phone or in writing.

Usually, calling Member Services is the first step. If there is anything else you need to do, Member Services will let you know.

Member Services

CALL

Local: 952-883-7979

Outside the metro area: 1-800-233-9645

Calls to this number are free.

From October 15, 2011, through February 14, 2012, you may call from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., **seven days a week** to speak with a representative.

Starting on February 15, 2012, you may call from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. **Monday through Friday** to speak with a representative. On Saturdays, Sundays and holidays, you may leave a voice mail, which will be returned within one business day.

TTY

Local: 952-883-6060

Outside the metro area: 1-800-443-0156

This number requires special telephone equipment and is only for people who have difficulties with hearing or speaking.

Calls to this number are free.

From October 15, 2011, through February 14, 2012, you may call from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., **seven days a week** to speak with a representative.

Starting on February 15, 2012, you may call from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. **Monday through Friday** to speak with a representative. On Saturdays, Sundays and holidays, you may leave a voice mail, which will be returned within one business day.

- **If you do not wish to call (or you called and were not satisfied), you can put your complaint in writing and send it to us.** If you put your complaint in writing, we will respond to your complaint in writing.

In General

There are complaint procedures to resolve concerns and disputes between or on behalf of members, applicants and us. Complaints may be made in writing or orally, as stated above. Complaints may concern eligibility issues; cancellations, or nonrenewals of coverage; administrative operations; and the quality, timeliness, and appropriateness of health care services provided. Our member complaint system is limited to members, applicants, former members, or an authorized representative of a member, applicant or former member seeking to resolve a dispute which arose during their membership or application for membership.

Complaints must be sent or directed to the address shown in Chapter 2, Section 1 under “How to contact us when you are making a complaint about your medical care” or the phone number shown above.

Depending on the nature of your complaint, you may also have the right to file an appeal through the Medicare appeals process described earlier in this chapter. If you have questions about which process to use to resolve complaints, you may call Member Services. We are ultimately responsible for all appeals functions.

HMO Internal Complaint Procedures

- a. You may submit a complaint to Member Services, either in writing or orally, no later than 60 days after the event. Member Services will make every effort to resolve the complaint. If the oral complaint is not resolved to your satisfaction within 10 calendar days of receipt of the complaint, we will offer to provide a complaint form to the person making the complaint, which must be completed and returned to Member Services for further consideration. We will assist you in completing this form, or will complete the form and mail it to you for your signature, if you ask for assistance.
- b. Member Services will investigate the complaint. We will notify you within 10 business days that we received the written complaint, unless the complaint has been resolved to your satisfaction within those 10 business days. We will contact you in writing of our decision within 30 days of receipt of the written complaint or complaint form. We may take up to an additional 14 days to notify you of the decision if you request the extension or if we justify a need for additional information, and the delay is in your best interest. Member Services will inform you in advance of the extension and the reasons for the delay.

We will respond to a complaint within 24 hours if: (a) it involves our decision to invoke an extension of time to render an organization determination or reconsideration decision regarding a Medicare appeal; or (b) when the complaint

involves our denial of a request for an expedited organization determination or reconsideration or coverage determination or redetermination.

- c. Except for those complaints reviewed under the Medicare appeals process described earlier in this chapter, if you disagree with our initial decision, you may notify Member Services in writing. Member Services will provide you with the option of either a written reconsideration, or an oral reconsideration process. The term “reconsideration,” as used in this item c., applies to any issue other than those listed under the reconsideration step of the Medicare appeals process. See Section 5.3 of this chapter, “Step-by-step: How to make a Level 1 Appeal.” Written and oral reconsiderations shall include the receipt of testimony, correspondence, explanations, or other information from you, staff persons, administrators, providers, or other persons, as is deemed necessary for a fair appraisal and resolution of the complaint. At any time, you may also file a complaint with the Commissioner of Health, either in writing at Minnesota Department of Health, Managed Care Systems Section, P.O. Box 64882, St. Paul, MN 55164-0882 or by calling (651) 201-5100, or toll-free 1-800-657-3916.

In the case of a written reconsideration, written notice of the decision and all key findings will be sent to you within 30 days of Member Services’ receipt of your written request for written reconsideration.

In the case of an oral reconsideration process, written notice of the decision and all key findings will be sent to you within 45 days of Member Services’ receipt of your written request for an oral reconsideration process.

- d. If a complaint is not resolved to your satisfaction after the reconsideration decision (as set forth in item c. above), you may contest our internal reconsideration decision and we will participate with you in arbitration or mediation, conducted according to the American Arbitration Association Rules. However, if the complaint relates to alleged malpractice, the complaint shall not be subject to arbitration or mediation. Should an arbitration occur, the judgment upon the award rendered by the arbitrator(s) may be entered in any court having jurisdiction under the applicable Minnesota Statutes.
- **Whether you call or write, you should contact Member Services right away.** The complaint must be made within 60 calendar days after you had the problem you want to complain about.
 - **If you are making a complaint because we denied your request for a “fast response” to a coverage decision or appeal, we will automatically give you a “fast” complaint.** If you have a “fast” complaint, it means we will give you **an answer within 24 hours.**

Legal Terms	What this section calls a “fast complaint” is also called an “expedited grievance.”
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Step 2: We look into your complaint and give you our answer.

- **If possible, we will answer you right away.** If you call us with a complaint, we may be able to give you an answer on the same phone call. If your health condition requires us to answer quickly, we will do that.
- **Most complaints are answered in 30 calendar days.** If we need more information and the delay is in your best interest or if you ask for more time, we can take up to 14 more calendar days (44 calendar days total) to answer your complaint.
- **If we do not agree** with some or all of your complaint or don't take responsibility for the problem you are complaining about, we will let you know. Our response will include our reasons for this answer. We must respond whether we agree with the complaint or not.

Section 9.4	You can also make complaints about quality of care to the Quality Improvement Organization
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You can make your complaint about the quality of care you received to us by using the step-by-step process outlined above.

When your complaint is about *quality of care*, you also have two extra options:

- **You can make your complaint to the Quality Improvement Organization.** If you prefer, you can make your complaint about the quality of care you received directly to this organization (*without* making the complaint to us).
 - The Quality Improvement Organization is a group of practicing doctors and other health care experts paid by the Federal government to check and improve the care given to Medicare patients.
 - To find the name, address, and phone number of the Quality Improvement Organization for your state, look in Chapter 2, Section 4, of this booklet. If you make a complaint to this organization, we will work with them to resolve your complaint.
- **Or you can make your complaint to both at the same time.** If you wish, you can make your complaint about quality of care to us and also to the Quality Improvement Organization.

Chapter 8. Ending your membership in the plan

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SECTION 1 Introduction

Section 1.1 This chapter focuses on ending your membership in our plan

Ending your membership in HealthPartners Freedom Vital may be **voluntary** (your own choice) or **involuntary** (not your own choice):

- You might leave our plan because you have decided that you *want* to leave.
 - You can disenroll from the plan at any time. Section 2 tells you more about *when* you can end your membership in the plan.
 - The process for voluntarily ending your membership varies depending on what type of new coverage you are choosing. Section 3 tells you *how* to end your membership in each situation.
- There are also limited situations where you do not choose to leave, but we are required to end your membership. Section 5 tells you about situations when we must end your membership.

If you are leaving our plan, you must continue to get your medical care through our plan until your membership ends.

SECTION 2 When can you end your membership in our plan?

Section 2.1 You can end your membership at any time
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You can disenroll from this plan at any time. You may switch to Original Medicare or, if you have a Special Enrollment Period, you may enroll in a Medicare health plan. Your membership will usually end on the last day of the month in which we receive your request to change your plan.

Section 2.2	Where can you get more information about when you can end your membership?
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If you have any questions or would like more information on when you can end your membership:

- You can **call Member Services** (phone numbers are on the back cover of this booklet).
- You can find the information in the *Medicare & You 2012* Handbook.
 - Everyone with Medicare receives a copy of *Medicare & You* each fall. Those new to Medicare receive it within a month after first signing up.
 - You can also download a copy from the Medicare website (<http://www.medicare.gov>). Or, you can order a printed copy by calling Medicare at the number below.
- You can contact **Medicare** at 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227), 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.

SECTION 3 **How do you end your membership in our plan?**

Section 3.1	To end your membership, you must ask us in writing
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You may end your membership in our plan at any time during the year and change to Original Medicare. To end your membership, you must make a request in writing to us. Your membership will end on the last day of the month in which we receive your request. Contact us if you need more information on how to do this.

The table below explains how you should end your membership in our plan.

If you would like to switch from our plan to:	This is what you should do:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Another Medicare health plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enroll in the Medicare health plan. You will automatically be disenrolled from our plan when your new plan's coverage begins.

If you would like to switch from our plan to:

This is what you should do:

- Original Medicare *with* a separate Medicare prescription drug plan.

- **Send us a written request to disenroll. Contact Member Services if you need more information on how to do this (phone numbers are on the back cover of this booklet). Then contact the Medicare prescription drug plan that you want to enroll in and ask to be enrolled.**

- You can also contact **Medicare** at 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227), 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and ask to be disenrolled. TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.

You will be disenrolled from our plan when your coverage in Original Medicare begins. If you join a Medicare prescription drug plan, that coverage should begin at this time as well.

- Original Medicare *without* a separate Medicare prescription drug plan.

- **Send us a written request to disenroll. Contact Member Services if you need more information on how to do this (phone numbers are on the back cover of this booklet).**

- You can also contact **Medicare** at 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227), 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and ask to be disenrolled. TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.

- You will be disenrolled from our plan when your coverage in Original Medicare begins.

SECTION 4 Until your membership ends, you must keep getting your medical services through our plan

Section 4.1 Until your membership ends, you are still a member of our plan
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If you leave our plan, it may take time before your membership ends and your new Medicare coverage goes into effect. (See Section 2 for information on when your new coverage begins.) During this time, you must continue to get your medical care through our plan.

- **If you are hospitalized on the day that your membership ends, your hospital stay will usually be covered by our plan until you are discharged** (even if you are discharged after your new health coverage begins).
- If you use out-of-network providers to obtain medical services, the services are covered under Original Medicare. You will be responsible for Original Medicare's cost sharing for such services, with the exception of emergency and urgently needed care.

SECTION 5 We must end your membership in the plan in certain situations

Section 5.1 When must we end your membership in the plan?

We must end your membership in the plan if any of the following happen:

- If you do not stay continuously enrolled in Part B. Members must stay continuously enrolled in Medicare Part B.
- If you move out of our service area for more than 90 days in a row (9 months in a row if you have activated the Extended Absence Benefit and remain inside the United States).
 - If you move or take a long trip for more than 90 days in a row, you need to call Member Services to find out if the place you are moving or traveling to is in our plan's area.
 - Go to Chapter 4, Section 2.2 for information on getting care when you are away from the service area through our plan's extended absence program.
 - If you have been a member of our plan continuously since before January 1999 *and* you were living outside of our service area before January 1999, you may continue your membership. However, if you move and your move is to another location that is outside of our service area, you will be disenrolled from our plan.
- If you become incarcerated (go to prison).

- If you lie about or withhold information about other insurance you have that provides prescription drug coverage.
- If you intentionally give us incorrect information when you are enrolling in our plan and that information affects your eligibility for our plan.
- If you continuously behave in a way that is disruptive and makes it difficult for us to provide medical care for you and other members of our plan.
 - We cannot make you leave our plan for this reason unless we get permission from Medicare first.
- If you let someone else use your membership card to get medical care.
 - If we end your membership because of this reason, Medicare may have your case investigated by the Inspector General.
- If you do not pay the plan premiums for two calendar months from the premium due date.
 - We must notify you in writing that you have two calendar months from the premium due date to pay the plan premium before we end your membership.

Where can you get more information?

If you have questions or would like more information on when we can end your membership:

- You can call **Member Services** for more information (phone numbers are on the back cover of this booklet).

Section 5.2	We <u>cannot</u> ask you to leave our plan for any reason related to your health
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What should you do if this happens?

If you feel that you are being asked to leave our plan because of a health-related reason, you should call Medicare at 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048. You may call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Section 5.3	You have the right to make a complaint if we end your membership in our plan
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If we end your membership in our plan, we must tell you our reasons in writing for ending your membership. We must also explain how you can make a complaint about our decision to end your membership. You can also look in Chapter 7, Section 9 for information about how to make a complaint.

Chapter 9. Legal notices

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SECTION 1 Notice about governing law

Many laws apply to this *Evidence of Coverage* and some additional provisions may apply because they are required by law. This may affect your rights and responsibilities even if the laws are not included or explained in this document. The principal law that applies to this document is Title XVIII of the Social Security Act and the regulations created under the Social Security Act by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, or CMS. In addition, other Federal laws may apply and, under certain circumstances, the laws of the state you live in.

SECTION 2 Notice about nondiscrimination

We don't discriminate based on a person's race, disability, religion, sex, health, ethnicity, creed, age, or national origin. All organizations that provide Medicare health plans, like our plan, must obey Federal laws against discrimination, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, the Americans with Disabilities Act, all other laws that apply to organizations that get Federal funding, and any other laws and rules that apply for any other reason.

SECTION 3 Assignment of benefits

You may not assign or in any way transfer your rights under this Evidence of Coverage.

SECTION 4 Rights of reimbursement and subrogation

If we provide or pay for services to treat an injury or illness: (a) caused by the act or omission of another party; or (b) covered by no fault or employer liability laws; or (c) available or required to be furnished by or through national or state governments or their agencies; or (d) sustained on the property of a third party, we have the right to recover the reasonable value of our services and payments made. This right shall be by reimbursement and subrogation. The right of reimbursement means you must repay us at the time you make any recovery. Recovery means all amounts received by you from any persons, organizations or insurers by way of settlement, judgment, award or otherwise on account of such injury or illness. The right of subrogation means that we may make claim in your name or our name against any persons, organizations or insurers on account of such injury or illness.

The rights of reimbursement and subrogation apply whether or not you have been fully compensated for your losses or damages by any recovery of payments; in the event you settle any claim against any third party, you are deemed to have been made whole by such settlement and we will be entitled to immediately collect the reasonable value of our subrogation rights from said payments.

If, after recovery of any payments, you receive services or incur expenses on account of such injury or illness, you may be required to pay for such services or expenses. The total of all reimbursement and payments will not exceed your recovery.

This right of reimbursement and subrogation applies to any type of recovery from any third party, including but not limited to recoveries from tortfeasors, underinsured motorist coverage, uninsured motorist coverage, medical payments coverage, other substitute coverage or any other right of recovery, whether based on tort, contract, equity or any other theory of recovery. The right of reimbursement is binding upon you, your legal representative, your heirs, next of kin and any trustee or legal representative of your heirs or next of kin in the event of your death. Any amounts you receive from such a recovery must be held in trust for our benefit to the extent of our subrogation claims.

You agree to cooperate fully in every effort by us to enforce our rights of reimbursement and subrogation. You also agree that you will not do anything to interfere with those rights. You agree to promptly inform us in writing of any situation or circumstance which may allow us to invoke our rights under this part. Our rights under this part are subject to and may be limited by law. A member desiring information about subrogation and our subrogation rights should consult an attorney.

SECTION 5 Important enrollee information and Enrollee bill of rights

The laws of the State of Minnesota provide members of an HMO certain legal rights, including the following:

Important enrollee information

1. **COVERED SERVICES.** These are network services provided by participating network providers or authorized by those providers. This Evidence of Coverage fully defines what services are covered and describes procedures you must follow to obtain coverage.
2. **PROVIDERS.** Enrolling with us does not guarantee services by a particular provider on the list of network providers. When a provider is no longer part of the network, you must choose among remaining network providers.
3. **EMERGENCY SERVICES.** Emergency services from providers outside the network will be covered. Read this Evidence of Coverage for the procedures, benefits and limitations associated with emergency care from network and non-network providers.
4. **EXCLUSIONS.** Certain services or medical supplies are not covered. Read this Evidence of Coverage for a detailed explanation of all exclusions.

5. **CANCELLATION.** Your coverage may be cancelled by you or us only under certain conditions. Read this Evidence of Coverage for the reasons for cancellation of coverage.
6. **MEDICAL EQUIPMENT.** Enrolling with us does not guarantee that any particular piece of medical equipment will be available, even if the equipment is available at the start of the contract year.

Enrollee bill of rights

1. Enrollees have the right to available and accessible services including urgently needed care and emergency services 24 hours a day and seven days a week.
2. Enrollees have the right to be informed of health problems, and to receive information regarding treatment alternatives and risks which is sufficient to assure informed choice.
3. Enrollees have the right to refuse treatment, and the right to privacy of medical or dental and financial records maintained by us and our health care providers, in accordance with existing law.
4. Enrollees have the right to file a complaint with us and the Commissioner of Health and the right to initiate a legal proceeding when experiencing a problem with us or our health care providers. If the enrollee disagrees with our decision to provide, arrange, pay for or discontinue a health care service, the enrollee has the right to use the Medicare Appeals Process.
5. Enrollees have the right to a grace period of 60 days for the payment of each enrollment payment due. This Evidence of Coverage shall continue in force during the grace period. Eligible claims incurred by the enrollee during the grace period, for which payment is not received, will not be the enrollee's responsibility.
6. Enrollees have the right to voluntarily disenroll from the HMO and the right not to be requested or encouraged to disenroll, except in circumstances specified in federal law.
7. Enrollees have the right to a clear description of nursing home and home care benefits covered by us.

SECTION 6 Continuity of care

In the event you must change your current primary care physician, specialty care physician or general hospital provider because that provider leaves the network, you may have the right to continue receiving services from your current provider for a period of time. Some services provided by non-network providers may be considered a covered benefit for up to 120 days under this Evidence of Coverage if you qualify for Continuity of Care benefits.

Conditions that qualify for this benefit are:

1. an acute condition;
2. a life-threatening mental or physical illness;
3. pregnancy beyond the first trimester of pregnancy;
4. a physical or mental disability defined as an inability to engage in one or more major life activities, provided that the disability has lasted or can be expected to last for at least one year, or can be expected to result in death; or
5. a disabling or chronic condition that is in an acute phase.

You may also request continuity of care benefits for culturally appropriate services or when we do not have a provider who can communicate with you directly or through an interpreter. Terminally ill patients are also eligible for continuity of care benefits.

SECTION 7 Terms and conditions of use of this Evidence of Coverage (EOC)

Use of this EOC is subject to the following:

- This EOC is available in printed form, and it may be available in electronic form.
- Only GHI is authorized to amend this EOC.
- Any other alteration to a printed or electronic EOC is unauthorized.
- In the event of a conflict between printed or electronic EOC only the authorized EOC will govern.

GHI names and logos and all related products and service names, design marks and slogans are the trademarks of Group Health Plan, Inc. or its related companies.

Chapter 10. Definitions of important words

Ambulatory Surgical Center – An Ambulatory Surgical Center is an entity that operates exclusively for the purpose of furnishing outpatient surgical services to patients not requiring hospitalization and whose expected stay in the center does not exceed 24 hours.

Annual Enrollment Period – A set time each fall when members can change their health or drugs plans. The Annual Enrollment Period is from October 15 until December 7, 2011. (As a member of a Medicare Cost Plan, you can switch to Original Medicare at any time. But you can only join a new Medicare health or drug plan during certain times of the year, such as the Annual Enrollment Period.)

Appeal – An appeal is something you do if you disagree with our decision to deny a request for coverage of health care services or prescription drugs or payment for services or drugs you already received. You may also make an appeal if you disagree with our decision to stop services that you are receiving. For example, you may ask for an appeal if we don't pay for a drug, item, or service you think you should be able to receive. Chapter 7 explains appeals, including the process involved in making an appeal.

Balance Billing – A situation in which a provider (such as a doctor or hospital) bills a patient more than the plan's cost-sharing amount for services. As a member of our plan, you only have to pay the plan's cost-sharing amounts when you get services covered by our plan. We do not allow providers to "balance bill" you. See Chapter 4, Section 1.3 for more information about balance billing.

Benefit Period – The way that both our plan and Original Medicare measure your use of hospital and skilled nursing facility (SNF) services. A benefit period begins the day you go into a hospital or skilled nursing facility. The benefit period ends when you haven't received any inpatient hospital care (or skilled care in a SNF) for 60 days in a row. If you go into a hospital or a skilled nursing facility after one benefit period has ended, a new benefit period begins. You must pay the inpatient hospital copayment for each benefit period. There is no limit to the number of benefit periods.

CareCheck[®] Service – This is a care coordination service for members of our plan who are receiving emergency care from out-of-network providers.

CareLineSM Service – This is a service of our plan, which employs a staff of registered nurses who are available by phone to assist members in assessing their need for medical care, and to coordinate after-hours care, as covered in this Evidence of Coverage.

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) – The Federal agency that administers Medicare. Chapter 2 explains how to contact CMS.

Charge – As it is used to describe charges for covered services delivered by participating network providers or network referral providers, the word “charge” is defined as follows:

- Charge is the provider's discounted charge for a given medical/surgical service, procedure or item.

As it is used to describe charges for covered services delivered by non-network providers, the word “charge” is defined as follows:

- Charge is the provider's charge for a given medical/surgical service, procedure or item, according to (1) the Medicare-allowable amount of the provider's billed charges or (2) the usual and customary charge allowed amount if Medicare has not established a fee for a particular service.

The Usual and Customary Charge is the maximum amount allowed our plan considers in the calculation of payment of charges incurred for certain covered services if Medicare has not established a fee for a particular service. It is consistent with the charge of other providers of a given service or item in the same region.

A charge is incurred for covered ambulatory medical and surgical services, on the date the service or item is provided. A charge is incurred for covered inpatient services, on the date of admission to a hospital. To be covered, a charge must be incurred on or after your effective date and on or before the termination date.

Coinsurance – An amount you may be required to pay as your share of the cost for services after you pay any deductibles. Coinsurance is usually a percentage (for example, 20%).

Comprehensive Outpatient Rehabilitation Facility (CORF) – A facility that mainly provides rehabilitation services after an illness or injury, and provides a variety of services including physical therapy, social or psychological services, respiratory therapy, occupational therapy and speech-language pathology services, and home environment evaluation services.

Convenience Clinic – This is a clinic that offers a limited set of services and does not require an appointment.

Copayment – An amount you may be required to pay as your share of the cost for a medical service or supply, like a doctor's visit, hospital outpatient visit, or a prescription drug. A copayment is usually a set amount, rather than a percentage. For example, you might pay \$10 or \$20 for a doctor's visit or prescription drug.

Cost Sharing – Cost sharing refers to amounts that a member has to pay when services are received. (This is in addition to the plan’s monthly premium.) Cost sharing includes any combination of the following three types of payments: (1) any deductible amount a plan may impose before services are covered; (2) any fixed “copayment” amount that a plan requires when a specific service is received; or (3) any “coinsurance” amount, a percentage of the total amount paid for a service, that a plan requires when the service is received.

Covered Services – The general term we use to mean all of the health care services and supplies that are covered by our plan.

Creditable Prescription Drug Coverage – Prescription drug coverage (for example, from an employer or union) that is expected to pay, on average, at least as much as Medicare’s standard prescription drug coverage. People who have this kind of coverage when they become eligible for Medicare can generally keep that coverage without paying a penalty, if they decide to enroll in Medicare prescription drug coverage later.

Custodial Care – Custodial care is personal care that can be provided by people who don’t have professional skills or training, such as help with activities of daily living like bathing, dressing, eating, getting in or out of a bed or chair, moving around, and using the bathroom. It may also include the kind of health-related care that most people do themselves, like using eye drops. Medicare doesn’t pay for custodial care.

Disenroll or Disenrollment – The process of ending your membership in our plan. Disenrollment may be voluntary (your own choice) or involuntary (not your own choice).

Durable Medical Equipment – Certain medical equipment that is ordered by your doctor for use at home. Examples are walkers, wheelchairs, or hospital beds.

Emergency – A medical emergency is when you, or any other prudent layperson with an average knowledge of health and medicine, believe that you have medical symptoms that require immediate medical attention to prevent loss of life, loss of a limb, or loss of function of a limb. The medical symptoms may be an illness, injury, severe pain, or a medical condition that is quickly getting worse.

Emergency Accidental Dental Services – These are services required immediately, because of a dental accident. (See the “Dental services” benefit under “Additional Benefits” in the Benefits Chart in Chapter 4.)

Emergency Care – Covered services that are: 1) rendered by a provider qualified to furnish emergency services; and 2) needed to evaluate or stabilize an emergency medical condition.

Evidence of Coverage (EOC) and Disclosure Information – This document, along with your enrollment form and any other attachments, riders, or other optional coverage selected, which explains your coverage, what we must do, your rights, and what you have to do as a member of our plan.

Extra Help – A Medicare program to help people with limited income and resources pay Medicare prescription drug program costs, such as premiums, deductibles, and coinsurance.

Grievance – A type of complaint you make about us or one of our network providers, including a complaint concerning the quality of your care. This type of complaint does not involve coverage or payment disputes.

Habilitative Care – This is speech, physical or occupational therapy which is rendered for congenital, developmental or medical conditions which have significantly limited the successful initiation of normal speech and normal motor development. To be considered habilitative, measurable functional improvement and measurable progress must be made toward achieving functional goals, within a predictable period of time toward a member's maximum potential ability. The determination of whether such measurable progress has been made is within the sole discretion of our medical director or his or her designee, based on objective documentation.

Home Health Aide – A home health aide provides services that don't need the skills of a licensed nurse or therapist, such as help with personal care (e.g., bathing, using the toilet, dressing, or carrying out the prescribed exercises). Home health aides do not have a nursing license or provide therapy.

Initial Enrollment Period – When you are first eligible for Medicare, the period of time when you can sign up for Medicare Part B. For example, if you're eligible for Part B when you turn 65, your Initial Enrollment Period is the 7-month period that begins 3 months before the month you turn 65, includes the month you turn 65, and ends 3 months after the month you turn 65.

Late Enrollment Penalty – An amount added to your monthly premium for Medicare drug coverage if you go without creditable coverage (coverage that is expected to pay, on average, at least as much as standard Medicare prescription drug coverage) for a continuous period of 63 days or more. You pay this higher amount as long as you have a Medicare drug plan. There are some exceptions. For example, if you receive Extra Help from Medicare to pay your prescription drug plan costs, the late enrollment penalty rules do not apply to you. If you receive Extra Help, you do not pay a penalty, even if you go without "creditable" prescription drug coverage.

Low Income Subsidy – See "Extra Help."

Maximum Out-of-Pocket Amount – The most that you pay out-of-pocket during the calendar year for covered Part A and Part B services. Amounts you pay for your plan premiums and Medicare Part A and Part B premiums do not count toward the maximum out-of-pocket amount. See Chapter 4, Section 1.2 for information about your maximum out-of-pocket amount.

Medicaid (or Medical Assistance) – A joint Federal and state program that helps with medical costs for some people with low incomes and limited resources. Medicaid programs vary from state to state, but most health care costs are covered if you qualify for both Medicare and Medicaid. See Chapter 2, Section 6 for information about how to contact Medicaid in your state.

Medically Necessary – Services, supplies, or drugs that are needed for the prevention, diagnosis, or treatment of your medical condition and meet accepted standards of medical practice.

Medicare – The Federal health insurance program for people 65 years of age or older, some people under age 65 with certain disabilities, and people with End-Stage Renal Disease (generally those with permanent kidney failure who need dialysis or a kidney transplant). People with Medicare can get their Medicare health coverage through Original Medicare, a Medicare Cost Plan, or a Medicare Advantage Plan.

Medicare Advantage (MA) Plan – Sometimes called Medicare Part C. A plan offered by a private company that contracts with Medicare to provide you with all your Medicare Part A and Part B benefits. A Medicare Advantage Plan can be an HMO, PPO, a Private Fee-for-Service (PFFS) plan, or a Medicare Medical Savings Account (MSA) plan. If you are enrolled in a Medicare Advantage Plan, Medicare services are covered through the plan, and are not paid for under Original Medicare. In most cases, Medicare Advantage Plans also offer Medicare Part D (prescription drug coverage). These plans are called **Medicare Advantage Plans with Prescription Drug Coverage**. Everyone who has Medicare Part A and Part B is eligible to join any Medicare health plan that is offered in their area, except people with End-Stage Renal Disease (unless certain exceptions apply).

Medicare Cost Plan – A Medicare Cost Plan is a plan operated by a Health Maintenance Organization (HMO) or Competitive Medical Plan (CMP) in accordance with a cost-reimbursed contract under section 1876(h) of the Act.

Medicare Coverage Gap Discount Program – A program that provides discounts on most covered Part D brand name drugs to Part D enrollees who have reached the Coverage Gap Stage and who are not already receiving “Extra Help.” Discounts are based on agreements between the Federal government and certain drug manufacturers. For this reason, most, but not all, brand name drugs are discounted.

Medicare Health Plan – A Medicare health plan is offered by a private company that contracts with Medicare to provide Part A and Part B benefits to people with Medicare who enroll in the plan. This term includes all Medicare Advantage Plans, Medicare Cost Plans, Demonstration/Pilot Programs, and Programs of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE).

Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage (Medicare Part D) – Insurance to help pay for outpatient prescription drugs, vaccines, biologicals, and some supplies not covered by Medicare Part A or Part B.

“Medigap” (Medicare Supplement Insurance) Policy – Medicare supplement insurance sold by private insurance companies to fill “gaps” in Original Medicare. Medigap policies only work with Original Medicare. (A Medicare Cost Plan is not a Medigap policy.)

Member (Member of our Plan, or “Plan Member”) – A person with Medicare who is eligible to get covered services, who has enrolled in our plan and whose enrollment has been confirmed by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS).

Member Services – A department within our plan responsible for answering your questions about your membership, benefits, grievances, and appeals. See Chapter 2 for information about how to contact Member Services.

Network – The participating providers described in the Provider Directory. See Chapter 1, Section 3.2, “The *Provider Directory*: Your guide to all providers in the plan’s network.”

Network Provider – “Provider” is the general term we use for doctors, other health care professionals, hospitals, and other health care facilities that are licensed or certified by Medicare and by the State to provide health care services. We call them “**network providers**” when they have an agreement with our plan to accept our payment as payment in full, and in some cases to coordinate as well as provide covered services to members of our plan. Our plan pays network providers based on the agreements it has with the providers or if the providers agree to provide you with plan-covered services. Network providers may also be referred to as “plan providers.”

Optional Supplemental Benefits – Non-Medicare-covered benefits that can be purchased for an additional premium and are not included in your package of benefits. If you choose to have optional supplemental benefits, you may have to pay an additional premium. You must voluntarily elect Optional Supplemental Benefits in order to get them.

Organization Determination – The Medicare Advantage organization has made an organization determination when it, or one of its providers, makes a decision about whether services are covered or how much you have to pay for covered services. Organizations determinations are called “coverage decisions” in this booklet. Chapter 7 explains how to ask us for a coverage decision.

Original Medicare (“Traditional Medicare” or “Fee-for-service” Medicare) – Original Medicare is offered by the government, and not a private health plan like Medicare Advantage Plans and prescription drug plans. Under Original Medicare, Medicare services are covered by paying doctors, hospitals, and other health care providers payment amounts established by Congress. You can see any doctor, hospital, or other health care provider that accepts Medicare. You must pay the deductible. Medicare pays its share of the Medicare-approved amount, and you pay your share. Original Medicare has two parts: Part A (Hospital Insurance) and Part B (Medical Insurance) and is available everywhere in the United States.

Out-of-Network Provider or Out-of-Network Facility – A provider or facility with which we have not arranged to coordinate or provide covered services to members of our plan. Out-of-network providers are providers that are not employed, owned, or operated by our plan or are not under contract to deliver covered services to you. Using out-of-network providers or facilities is explained in this booklet in Chapter 3.

Out-of-Pocket Costs – See the definition for “cost sharing” above. A member’s cost-sharing requirement to pay for a portion of services received is also referred to as the member’s “out-of-pocket” cost requirement.

Part C – see “**Medicare Advantage (MA) Plan.**”

Part D – The voluntary Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit Program. (For ease of reference, we will refer to the prescription drug benefit program as Part D.)

Preferred Provider Organization (PPO) Plan – A Preferred Provider Organization plan is a Medicare Advantage Plan that has a network of contracted providers that have agreed to treat plan members for a specified payment amount. A PPO plan must cover all plan benefits whether they are received from network or out-of-network providers. Member cost sharing will generally be higher when plan benefits are received from out-of-network providers. PPO plans have an annual limit on your out-of-pocket costs for services received from network (preferred) providers and a higher limit on your total combined out-of-pocket costs for services from both in-network (preferred) and out-of-network (non-preferred) providers.

Premium – The periodic payment to Medicare, an insurance company, or a health care plan for health or prescription drug coverage.

Primary Care Provider (PCP) – Your primary care provider is the doctor or other provider you see first for most health problems. He or she makes sure you get the care you need to keep you healthy. He or she also may talk with other doctors and health care providers about your care and refer you to them. In many Medicare health plans, you must see your primary care provider before you see any other health care provider. See Chapter 3, Section 2.1 for information about Primary Care Providers.

Prior Authorization – Approval in advance to get services. For Medicare Cost Plans, some in-network medical services are covered only if your doctor or other network provider gets “prior authorization” from us. Covered services that need prior authorization are marked in the Medical Benefits Chart in Chapter 4.

Quality Improvement Organization (QIO) – A group of practicing doctors and other health care experts paid by the Federal government to check and improve the care given to Medicare patients. See Chapter 2, Section 4 for information about how to contact the QIO for your state.

Rehabilitation Services – These services include physical therapy, speech and language therapy, and occupational therapy.

Service Area – A geographic area where a health plan accepts members if it limits membership based on where people live. For plans that limit which doctors and hospitals you may use, it’s also generally the area where you can get routine (non-emergency) services. The plan may disenroll you if you move out of the plan’s service area.

Skilled Nursing Facility (SNF) Care – Skilled nursing care and rehabilitation services provided on a continuous, daily basis, in a skilled nursing facility. Examples of skilled nursing facility care include physical therapy or intravenous injections that can only be given by a registered nurse or doctor.

Special Enrollment Period – A set time when members can change their health or drugs plans or return to Original Medicare. Situations in which you may be eligible for a Special Enrollment Period include: if you move outside the service area, if you are getting “Extra Help” with your prescription drug costs, if you move into a nursing home, or if we violate our contract with you.

Special Needs Plan – A special type of Medicare Advantage Plan that provides more focused health care for specific groups of people, such as those who have both Medicare and Medicaid, who reside in a nursing home, or who have certain chronic medical conditions.

Specialists – These are providers who are not in the following categories: Family Practice, General Practice, Internal Medicine, Pediatrics, Adolescent Medicine, Adult Medicine and Geriatrics.

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) – A monthly benefit paid by the Social Security Administration to people with limited income and resources who are disabled, blind, or age 65 and older. SSI benefits are not the same as Social Security benefits.

Urgently Needed Care – Urgently needed care is care provided to treat a non-emergency, unforeseen medical illness, injury, or condition, that requires immediate medical care, but the plan’s network of providers is temporarily unavailable or inaccessible.

virtuwell™ – virtuwell™ is an online service that you may use to receive a diagnosis and treatment for 30 simple, common conditions. These conditions include: colds, coughs, allergies, ear pain, sinus infections, pink eye, minor skin conditions, and yeast and urinary tract infections. You may access the virtuwell website at www.virtuwell.com.

Our plan's Member Services

CALL	<p>Local: 952-883-7979 Outside the metro area: 1-800-233-9645</p> <p>Calls to this number are free.</p> <p>From October 15, 2011, through February 14, 2012, you may call from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., seven days a week to speak with a representative.</p> <p>Starting on February 15, 2012, you may call from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Friday to speak with a representative. On Saturdays, Sundays and holidays, you may leave a voicemail, which will be returned within one business day.</p> <p>Member Services also has free language interpreter services available for non-English speakers.</p>
TTY	<p>Local: 952-883-6060 Outside the metro area: 1-800-443-0156</p> <p>This number requires special telephone equipment and is only for people who have difficulties with hearing or speaking.</p> <p>Calls to this number are free.</p> <p>From October 15, 2011, through February 14, 2012, you may call from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., seven days a week to speak with a representative.</p> <p>Starting on February 15, 2012, you may call from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Friday to speak with a representative. On Saturdays, Sundays and holidays, you may leave a voicemail, which will be returned within one business day.</p>
FAX	952-883-7333

WRITE	HealthPartners Member Services P.O. Box 9463 Minneapolis, MN 55440-9463
WEBSITE	healthpartners.com/medicare

The Senior LinkAge Line® (Minnesota's SHIP)

The Senior LinkAge Line® is a state program that gets money from the Federal government to give free local health insurance counseling to people with Medicare.

CALL	1-800-333-2433
TTY	1-800-627-3529 This number requires special telephone equipment and is only for people who have difficulties with hearing or speaking.
WRITE	Minnesota Board on Aging 540 Cedar Street St. Paul, MN 55155
WEBSITE	www.mnaging.org www.minnesotahelp.info