

CMS MA Premiums To Drop By 16%; Stand-Alone Part D Premiums To Increase Slightly

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CMS said Monday (Sept. 28) that weighted average premiums for Medicare Advantage plans will fall by 16% compared to last year while MA prescription drug plan premiums will fall by 38%.

Average stand-alone Part D premiums will rise by less than \$1 per month even as the administration discontinued the program meant to prevent large rate increases, which the agency views as an encouraging sign the program is returning to normal market conditions as it expected.

“Despite speculation and misleading reports related to the appropriate sunseting of the Part D Stabilization Demonstration Project, there is broad pricing stability across the Part D market,” CMS said. “The strong 2027 outlook means Medicare beneficiaries will continue to have access to affordable coverage and broad plan choice without relying on billions of dollars in temporary subsidies to insurance companies,” CMS adds.

The total average monthly Part D premium for stand-alone prescription drug plans is projected to increase less than \$1, from \$35.09 in 2026 to \$36 in 2027, CMS says.

Additionally, 88% of non-low-income beneficiaries can access a basic Part D plan for less than \$10.30, and 93% of those beneficiaries could get an enhanced Part D plan for less than \$6.

For MA plans with drug coverage, CMS says that after application of the MA rebates the average Part D total premium is projected to fall from \$11.32 in 2026 to \$7 in 2027.

“CMS is fighting to keep high-quality care options affordable and accessible for the millions of beneficiaries who rely on Medicare Advantage and Part D prescription drug plans,” CMS Administrator Mehmet Oz says in a release. “By slashing handouts to big insurance companies, CMS is keeping premiums stable... We urge beneficiaries to use

Open Enrollment as an opportunity to review their coverage, compare options, and pick the plan that best suits their needs and budget.”

According to CMS, MA plans expect about 34 million enrollees in 2027, or 47.4% of all beneficiaries -- but the agency emphasizes that plan projections historically understate actual enrollment, so “CMS expects actual 2027 MA enrollment to again be more robust than current plan projections indicate.”

The weighted average monthly premium across all MA plans, including plans with drug coverage and Special Needs Plans (SDP), is projected to decrease by 16.5% from \$14.37 in 2026 to \$12.00 in 2027, CMS says.

Supplemental offers are expected to remain stable.

The agency also says that more than 99% of MA beneficiaries have access to at least one plan, while 97% can choose from 10 or more plans. Total MA plans available nationally will remain fairly stable, falling from 5,533 in 2026 to 5,532 in 2027.

Medicare open enrollments starts Oct. 15, and the agency encourages beneficiaries to visit the Medicare Plan Finder to compare plan options. The agency also touts enhancements to the consumer experiences, including more secure logins. “Starting in October, users will be able to review more details about preventive services offered by health plans, easily connect from Medicare.gov to important plan documents like formularies and Summary of Benefits, and see clear, prominent messages about changes impacting their current plans in 2027,” the agency says.

Premiums and cost data for MA and Part D plans are available [here](#), and state-level information is available [here](#). -- Amy Lotven (alotven@iwpnews.com)