

GET READY FOR THE MEDICARE ANNUAL ELECTION PERIOD

Every year from **October 15 to December 7** you have the opportunity to enroll or make changes in your Part D Prescription Drug plans or Medicare Advantage plans. If there are providers or benefits you want or there is something about your plan you are unhappy with, this is the time to review.

For 2019 there were 30 Part D plans available and 42 Medicare Advantage plans to choose from. This does not include some additional special needs plans that are available for people with chronic disabling conditions or people in certain long term care facilities.

You should have received or will shortly receive your plan's **Annual Notice Of Change** indicating what changes, if any, your plan will experience starting 1/1/20. You should review those changes. We review these ANOCs when they come out and alert our existing clients to significant changes or better options for them in the marketplace.

We also suggest that you confirm that your plan will continue to cover your prescriptions in a similar manner for 2020. Medicare.gov provides the tools you need to accomplish this. Or, you should check with your plan or agent and have them confirm there are no significant changes.

If you think you may be starting any new drug regimen; visit your doctor soon, so that you can factor those new medications into the projection for 2020.

Every year we offer to review our existing clients' prescription drug coverage. We also offer to review drug coverage for all of our Medicare Advantage clients. We usually recommend to about 15% of our clients that they make a change in plans for a better value or because of new restrictions on their drugs. But, for 85% we often see no compelling reasons to change.

If you address this early in the Annual Election Period you **may** be able to get drug exceptions made for the following year without having to change plans. We find that by doing this review, we have vastly reduced the panic calls from clients in January or February that suddenly discover their drugs are no longer covered or have new restrictions.

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