



Medicare Advantage Plan Challenges – Media Spotlight

As Medicare Advantage (MA) Plan enrollment has surged, scrutiny has also increased among these health plans. Current predictions suggest that MA enrollment will be significantly higher than traditional Medicare by 2030.¹ On average, Medicare beneficiaries could choose from 33 MA health plans in 2021.¹ Media outlets have highlighted the challenges faced by providers as Medicare Advantage enrollment continues to grow due to misleading advertising tactics from several private MA plans.² Media reports indicate that skilled nursing providers are facing difficulties with tracking claim criteria, reimbursement rates, submission processes, and billing time frames from the various MA plans.¹ In response to these hardships, skilled nursing operators have sought out revenue-boosting strategies, including institutional special needs plan (I-SNP) enrollment.¹ Organizations and providers alike have become more critical of Medicare Advantage, increasing lobbying efforts to increase CMS oversight and implement stricter regulations of MA plans.³

Recent media outlet coverage indicates:

- Approximately 4,000 MA plans are available across the U.S. in 2023, which is a 6% increase with 228 more plans offered in comparison to 2022.⁴
- More Medicare Advantage plans are available in 2023 compared to any other year going back to 2010.⁴
- The increase in SNPs has nearly doubled from 97 plans in 2018 to 189 plans in 2023, showing an increase interest in population health management and value-based contracting.⁴

Medicare Advantage plans continue to proliferate in 2023, resulting in providers seeking out additional revenue strategies.¹ The focus on I-SNPs continues to increase due to interest from nursing home operators as a way to recover financially from the pandemic.¹ Skilled nursing providers still face operational and financial obstacles due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the continued growth of health plans.² As more plans arise, lobbyists continue to fight for increased CMS oversight and regulation, gaining traction with federal officials.³ Lawmakers and organizations alike have questioned the aggressive sales tactics during the enrollment period, bringing light to these pertinent issues associated with Medicare Advantage plans.³

What the Media is Saying

McKnight's LTC News
on SNF financial hardships:
“Use of SNFs for post-acute care declines to 51% of the pre-pandemic rate,”
leading SNF owners and operators to enroll or create their own I-SNP.

Kaiser Family Foundation
on the abundance of health plans:
“53% of all Medicare beneficiaries can choose from more than 40 Medicare Advantage plans where they live”
overwhelming seniors and leading to provider administrative burden.⁴

Bloomberg Law
on lobbying efforts against Medicare Advantage:
“The letter to federal officials has added new signatures- 346 House members last Congress or 80% of the chamber attesting to the popularity of the plans,” proving the need increased oversight of MA plans.³

¹ [Revenue-boosting strategies for struggling SNF industry](#). Published February 2023.

² Wasik J. [How Medicare Advantage Ads Can Be Misleading: What to Know](#). Published February 2023.

³ Ruoff A. [Progressives Take Aim at Insurers in Medicare Advantage Fight](#). Published January 2023.

⁴ Freed M et al. [Medicare Advantage 2023 Spotlight: First Look. Kaiser Family Foundation](#). Published November 2022.