

# MEDICARE

*Celebrating  
51  
Successful  
Years*

*Happy Anniversary*

For 51 years Medicare has served America's seniors well. We celebrate the program's July 30th anniversary with a look at what makes this program such a huge success.

## Top 10 Reasons Americans **Love** Medicare

1. **Medicare provides comprehensive health care coverage for seniors.** Since its creation in 1965, Medicare has provided universal health care to millions of seniors.
2. **Medicare provides health security for seniors.** Today only 2% of the elderly lack health insurance compared to 48% in 1962, before we had Medicare.
3. **Medicare provides free preventive health screenings.** Seniors do not pay for Mammograms, Diabetes or Cancer screenings thanks to provisions in the Affordable Care Act (ACA).
4. **Medicare provides 41.8 million seniors prescription drug coverage through Part D.** The program will be even better when, thanks to the ACA, the Part D coverage gap known as the “donut hole” will be phased out by 2020.
5. **9 million disabled Americans** receiving Social Security benefits also receive health coverage through Medicare.
6. **Medicare’s costs rise slower than private insurance.** Medicare spending per enrollee grew at an average annual rate of 7.5% between 1969 and 2013, slower than the 9.1% growth rate in private health insurance.
7. **Medicare is efficient.** Only 1% of traditional Medicare is overhead compared to 6% for privatized Medicare.
8. **Medicare promotes greater health equity in America.** Medicare provides older people of color, who are more likely to have lower incomes and therefore less able to save for health care costs, with a critical economic lifeline.
9. **We earn our Medicare coverage.** Medicare isn’t welfare. American workers’ payroll taxes fund hospital, skilled nursing, home health and hospice care and premiums cover a portion of the costs for physician visits, outpatient visits and preventive services.
10. **Medicare is a social insurance program that works.** Perhaps one of the biggest reasons why Medicare is universally cherished is that in return for the contributions we make during our working years we receive guaranteed health benefits.

