



The Primary Care Providers associated with Virginia Mason Memorial have decided that as of January 1, 2020, they will only provide care to Medicare beneficiaries who are covered by a Medicare Advantage (MA) insurance product. There are many reasons for this decision, among them:

1. Medicare Advantage provides additional benefits to patients that helps our providers manage your medical needs better than traditional Medicare plans.
2. Providers have indicated improved quality and health outcomes by patients using a Medicare Advantage plan.
3. This decision allows our providers to serve the greatest number of Medicare patients possible, while maintaining a sustainable clinic practice.

Why Medicare Advantage?

First, with a Medicare Advantage plan, your care will be coordinated by a team of medical professionals, including primary care physicians and specialists, who will regularly check in with you to ensure you're unique health care needs are being effectively managed. This team includes a full-time dietitian, pharmacist, care coordinators, social workers and other community services agencies to help you navigate through the health care system, whether for an unexpected illness or a chronic condition. Moreover, Medicare Advantage plans enable our Virginia Mason Memorial providers to select specific chronic care management programs to assist patients. In many cases, Medicare Advantage beneficiaries have lower out-of-pocket costs overall compared to traditional Medicare beneficiaries.

Next Steps

We understand that choosing your Medicare coverage can be confusing and that is why Virginia Mason Memorial is providing additional information in our clinics to assist you in making a decision. If you choose to transition to a Medicare Advantage plan, you are free to select any available MA plan. The 2018 Medicare Advantage open enrollment period runs from October 15, 2018 through December 7, 2018. You have until January 1, 2020 to make your selection, or if you prefer to maintain your existing coverage under the traditional Medicare program, our providers and clinic staff can assist you with transferring to another primary care provider of your choosing.

We encourage you to contact your insurance broker to answer any of your questions and help you choose the right plan. You may also learn more about Medicare Advantage products available in the Yakima area by contacting Health Alliance by phone at 1-877-642-3331 or online at <https://medicare.healthalliance.org>.

Sincerely,



Russ Myer
President & CEO, Virginia Mason Memorial

And your Team of Memorial Primary Care Physicians