

## NewsBREAK | April 12

### CMS Issued Final Policy and Technical Changes for Medicare Advantage and Part D

- On April 12, 2023, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) issued a final rule titled “Medicare Program; Contract Year 2024 Policy and Technical Changes to the Medicare Advantage Program, Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit Program, Medicare Cost Plan Program, and Programs of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly” (Final Rule).
- Medicare Advantage/Part C and Part D Prescription Drug Plan Quality Rating System – CMS is finalizing a health equity index (HEI) reward for the 2027 Star Ratings to incentivize Parts C and D plans to focus on improving care for enrollees with social risk factors (SRFs).
- Health Equity in Medicare Advantage (MA) – CMS is amending the list of populations that may require consideration specific to their needs to include:
  - People with limited English proficiency or reading skills.
  - People of ethnic, cultural, racial, or religious minorities.
  - People with disabilities.
  - People who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or other diverse sexual orientations.
  - People who identify as transgender, nonbinary, and other diverse gender identities. or people who were born intersex.
  - People who live in rural areas and other areas with high levels of deprivation.
  - People otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality.
- Utilization Management Requirements – Prior authorization policies for coordinated care plans may only be used to confirm the presence of diagnoses or other medical criteria and/or ensure that an item or service is medically necessary and must be valid for as long as medically necessary.
- Strengthening Translation and Accessible Format Requirements for Medicare Advantage, Part D, and D–SNP Enrollee Marketing and Communication Materials – MA organizations, cost plans, and Part D sponsors must provide materials on a standing basis in any non-English language that is the primary language of at least 5 percent of the individuals in the service area or accessible format upon learning of the enrollee’s primary language and/or need for an accessible format.
- Expanding Eligibility for Low-Income Subsidies (LIS) Under Part D of the Medicare Program – CMS is implementing requirements under the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), that expand eligibility for the full LIS to individuals with incomes up to 150 percent of the Federal poverty level (FPL) beginning on or after January 1, 2024.
- This Final Rule is effective on June 5, 2023 and is applicable to coverage beginning January 1, 2024, except as otherwise noted in the Final Rule.

See the Final Rule for additional details.

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### More on This Topic

- [Final Rule](#)

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For questions, please reach out to [Tyler Thorne](#).

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