

# HALF A CENTURY OF HELP WITH MEDICARE

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On July 30, 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed Medicare into law with these words: “No longer will older Americans be denied the healing miracle of modern medicine. No longer will illness crush and destroy the savings that they have so carefully put away over a lifetime.”

For 50 years, the Medicare program has provided essential health care services for millions of people who are age 65 or older, disabled, or have debilitating diseases. Without Medicare, many people would not be able to pay for hospital care, doctor’s visits, medical tests, preventive services, or prescription drugs.

Your Medicare card is the most important piece of identification you own as a Medicare beneficiary since medical providers will request it when you seek their services. If you need to replace a lost, stolen, or damaged Medicare card, you can do it online with a “my Social Security” account at [www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount](https://www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount). Requesting a replacement card through “my Social Security” is safe, convenient, and easy. Going online saves you a trip to your local Social Security office or unproductive time on the phone. Request your replacement Medicare card the easy and convenient way — online — and you’ll get it in the same amount of time as you would if you applied in an office or over the phone — in about 30 days.

Fifty years ago, Medicare did not have as many options as it does today. As the largest public health program in the United States, Medicare includes four parts to keep you covered:

- Part A is insurance that covers inpatient hospital stays, outpatient care in nursing facilities, hospice, and home health care.
- Part B includes medical insurance for doctor’s services, medical supplies, outpatient care, and preventive services.
- Part C is a Medicare advantage plan that allows you to choose your health care coverage through a provider organization. You must have Part A and Part B to enroll in Part C. This plan usually includes Medicare prescription drug coverage and may include extra benefits and services at an additional cost.
- Part D is prescription drug coverage. There is a separate monthly premium for this plan; however, people with low resources and income may qualify for the “Extra Help” with Medicare prescription drug costs from Social Security. Visit [www.socialsecurity.gov/prescriptionhelp](https://www.socialsecurity.gov/prescriptionhelp) to see if you qualify.

A recent survey to Medicare beneficiaries asked: Why do you love Medicare? One person stated, “It gives peace of mind not only for seniors, but for veterans and disabled as well.” Another satisfied recipient replied, “I most likely wouldn’t be alive today without Medicare.” These are just two of the millions who endorse Medicare’s half-century strong success story. For more information about Medicare, visit [www.medicare.gov](https://www.medicare.gov).