

# Agent Alert

MedicareBlue™ Solutions



**October 24, 2018**

## **In this Agent Alert:**

- 2018 to 2019 Notable formulary changes (page 1)
- 2019 Medicare Part A & Part B rates released (page 2-3)
- Known CVS webtool issue: iOS devices not compatible (page 4)

## **2018 to 2019 Notable formulary changes**

Lists of the most notable changes from the 2018 to 2019 formularies will be posted under the Documents tab by October 31 on **YourMedicareSolutions.com**.

There are separate lists showing the notable changes to each plan option. The lists identify changes to drugs that may have an impact on current members. The changes may require members to talk to their doctor to determine whether to switch drugs or to submit a coverage determination to see if they may be able to continue using that drug.

Many of the changes occurred for the following reasons:

- Some changes are typical when a formulary is updated for the year. Remember that formularies change every year.
- Some changes are the result of tighter controls from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid (CMS) on drugs classified as high risk medications for those over age 65.
- Other drugs may be on a different tier in 2019. This happens when more than one generic of a drug is available or if a generic of a brand-name drug is or will soon become available.

See attached files for these documents.

# Agent Alert

MedicareBlue<sup>SM</sup> Solutions



October 24, 2018

## 2019 Medicare Part A & Part B rates released

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has released the 2019 Medicare Part A and Part B deductible and copay changes. The chart below compares 2018 and 2019 amounts.

Medicare Part:	2018 amounts	2019 amounts
<b>Part A premiums (monthly):</b> (paid by about 1% of beneficiaries) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Beneficiaries who have fewer than 30 quarters of Medicare-covered employment</li><li>Beneficiaries who have at least 30 quarters of Medicare-covered employment</li></ul>	\$422 \$232	\$437 \$240
<b>Part A deductible per benefit period:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>For days 1-60 of a hospital stay</li><li>For days 61-90 of a hospital stay</li><li>For days 91-150 of a hospital stay</li></ul>	\$1,340 \$0 \$335 copay per day \$670 copay per day	\$1,364 \$0 \$341 copay per day \$682 copay per day
<b>Part A skilled nursing facility stays:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Days 1-20</li><li>Days 21-100</li></ul>	\$0 \$167.50 copay per day	\$0 \$170.50 copay per day
<b>Part B premium*</b>	\$134	\$135.50
<b>Part B deductible (per year)</b>	\$183	\$185

\*The Part B premium paid by beneficiaries who are subject to the "hold harmless" provision could vary based on the beneficiary's Social Security benefit.

Beneficiaries with higher incomes will pay a higher Part B premium for 2019. This is a separate income-related monthly adjustment amount (IRMAA) than that for Part D. The 2019 Part B premiums for high-income beneficiaries are shown on the next page.

# Agent Alert

MedicareBlue™ Solutions



October 24, 2018

Beneficiaries who file an individual tax return with income:	Beneficiaries who file a joint tax return with income:	Beneficiaries who are married and lived with their spouse at any time during the year but file a separate tax return from their spouse:	Income-related monthly adjustment amount	Total monthly premium amount
Less than or equal to \$85,000	Less than or equal to \$170,000	Less than or equal to \$85,000	\$0.00	\$135.50
Greater than \$85,000 and less than or equal to \$107,000	Greater than \$170,000 and less than or equal to \$214,000	NA	\$54.10	\$189.60
Greater than \$107,000 and less than or equal to \$133,500	Greater than \$214,000 and less than or equal to \$267,000	NA	\$135.40	\$270.90
Greater than \$133,500 and less than or equal to \$160,000	Greater than \$267,000 and less than or equal to \$320,000	NA	\$216.70	\$352.20
Greater than \$160,000 and less than \$500,000	Greater than \$320,000 and less than \$750,000	Greater than \$85,000 and less than \$415,000	\$297.90	\$433.40
Greater than or equal to \$500,000	Greater than or equal to \$750,000	Greater than or equal to \$415,000	\$325.00	\$460.50

For agent use only. Not for use with the public.

# Agent Alert

MedicareBlue™ Solutions



**October 24, 2018**

## **Known CVS webtool issue: iOS devices not compatible**

If users attempt to use an iPhone or iPad to access certain CVS webtools, they will receive the following error message:

“Sorry, that link doesn’t work with your device at this time. Please try a different device or computer. For benefits coverage information, please call the Medicare Part D plan. Phone number (s) are located on their website.”

If a beneficiary contacts you because they are unable to use one of the CVS webtools, please apologize for the inconvenience and advise them that we are aware of the issue. Confirm these tools work on other devices and computers and offer to help them locate the information they need. Our teams are working toward a solution, but the timeline for a solution is currently unknown.

### **What tools are affected?**

- Drug cost estimator
- Drug search tool
- Pharmacy search tool

### **What devices are impacted?**

- iPhones with iOS
- iPads with iOS

### **Questions or have an enrollment? Call a Broker Help Desk**

If you have questions, want to enroll an applicant by telephone or help a member make a change, please contact the appropriate agent/broker help line:

- MedicareBlue Rx pre-enrollment toll free at **1-866-464-3919**
- MedicareBlue Rx post-enrollment toll free at **1-866-849-2498**

MedicareBlue Rx coverage is separately issued by one of the following plans: Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Iowa,\* Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota,\* Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Montana,\* Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska,\* Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Dakota,\* Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield of South Dakota\* and Blue Cross Blue Shield of Wyoming.\*

\*Independent licensees of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association

For agent use only. Not for use with the public.