

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
Room 352-G
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20201



CMS NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 3, 2020

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CMS Care Compare Empowers Patients when Making Important Health Care Decisions

Improved tool makes it easier for patients to find important information when shopping for health care services

Today, under the leadership of President Trump, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) launched [Care Compare](#), a streamlined redesign of eight existing CMS healthcare compare tools available on [Medicare.gov](#). Care Compare provides a single user-friendly interface that patients and caregivers can use to make informed decisions about healthcare based on cost, quality of care, volume of services, and other data. With just one click, patients can find information that is easy to understand about doctors, hospitals, nursing homes, and other health care services instead of searching through multiple tools.

For more than 20 years, Medicare's online compare tools have served as the cornerstone for publicizing quality care information for patients, caregivers, consumers, and the healthcare community. Today's announcement builds on the [eMedicare initiative](#) that first launched by the Trump Administration in 2018 to deliver simple tools and information to current and future Medicare beneficiaries. Drawing on lessons learned through research and stakeholder feedback, Care Compare includes features and functionalities that appeal to consumers. By offering a user-friendly interface and a simple design that is optimized for mobile and tablet use, it is easier than ever to find information that is important to patients when shopping for healthcare. Enhancements for mobile use will give practical benefits like accessing the tool using a smartphone can initiate phone calls to providers simply by clicking on the provider's phone number.

"President Trump has long recognized that a free and vibrant healthcare market is one in which patients have what they need to make informed decisions based on cost and quality," said CMS Administrator Seema Verma. "By aggregating all eight of CMS' quality tools into a single interface, patients can easily research different providers and facilities before they entrust themselves to their care. Today's launch of Care Compare is the next step in fulfilling our eMedicare promise. Our Administration is committed to ensuring our tools are robust and beneficial to patients."

Currently, someone who is planning to have bypass surgery would need to visit Hospital Compare, Nursing Home Compare, and Home Health Compare individually to research providers for the different phases of their surgery and rehabilitation. Now, those patients can start their search at Care Compare to find and compare providers that meet their healthcare needs that includes information about quality measures presented similarly and clearly across all provider types and care settings.

Patients will also find helpful hints and guides throughout Care Compare. For example, when searching for a nursing home, patients have the ability to utilize a checklist with common questions and considerations when selecting a nursing home. While the measures and data used for Care Compare have not changed, the way information is displayed is now different. During a transition period, consumers and other stakeholders will be able to use the original eight compare tools while CMS continues to gather feedback and considers additional improvements to the tool. As new information about quality and cost are added to the compare tools, Care Compare will be updated to reflect that information.

In conjunction with the launch of Care Compare, additional improvements have been made to other CMS data tools to help Medicare beneficiaries compare costs. The [Procedure Price Look Up](#) (PPL) tool now includes physician fees in addition to facility fees, offering people with Medicare a more accurate prediction of the true out-of-pocket costs. The [Provider Data Catalog](#) (PDC) better serves innovators and stakeholders who are interested in detailed CMS data and use interactive and downloadable datasets like those currently available on [data.Medicare.gov](#). The PDC now makes quality datasets available through an improved Application Programming Interface (API), allowing innovators in the field to easily access and analyze the CMS publicly reported data and make it useful for patients. In addition, the PPL now makes data available through an API, and integrates Current Procedural Terminology code data from the American Medical Association.

Other new tools launched under the eMedicare initiative include:

- A completely redesigned Medicare Plan Finder Tool for last Open Enrollment;
- “What’s Covered” app that tells people what’s covered and what’s not in Original Medicare;
- A price transparency tool that lets consumers compare Medicare payments and copayments for certain procedures performed in both hospital outpatient departments and ambulatory surgical centers;
- Interactive online decision support to help people better understand and evaluate their Medicare coverage options and costs between Original Medicare and Medicare Advantage;
- An online service that lets people quickly see how different coverage choices will affect their estimated out-of-pocket costs
- Webchat option in Medicare Plan Finder helps people get on-the-spot support; and
- Easy-to-use surveys across [Medicare.gov](#) so patients and consumers can continue to offer feedback about their online experiences.

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