



Medicare: What It Means to Seniors

Lina Walker, Ph.D.

Vice President, AARP

The 24th Princeton Conference

AARP[®]
Real Possibilities

**Public Policy
Institute**

How are Seniors Reacting to AHCA



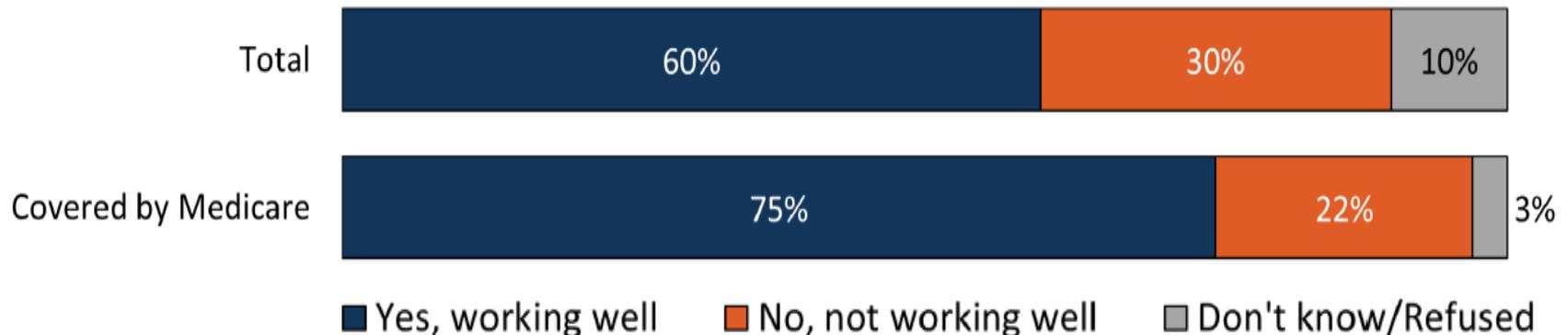
- Seniors are worried; concerned that AHCA may affect them
- Watchful – does it open way for bigger Medicare changes
- Low-income Medicare beneficiaries – can they get the care/support they need

Medicare To Seniors

Percent who say Medicare is Very Important

77%

Is Medicare working well for most seniors?



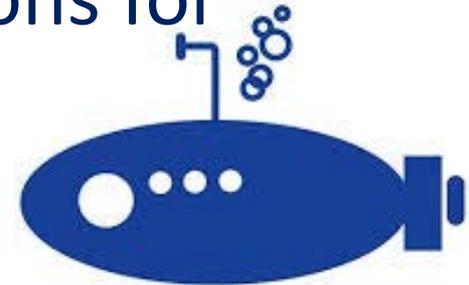
Under the Radar

Actual & Potential Changes

- No major overall proposal on the table now
- Some changes, not catch public attention
- But, could have major implications for beneficiaries

Examples:

- “Doc fix” and paying for value
- Private Contracting/Balance Billing



UNDER
THE RADAR

AARP[®]
Real Possibilities

**Public Policy
Institute**



Need to Ask: Is It Good Policy for People

Q1: Goal?

- Reduce spending, improve health/quality

Q2: How Accomplished?

- Cutting benefits, shifting costs, better for less



Need to Ask: 3rd Question

- **Q3: How Evaluated?**
 - Federal savings, beneficiary impact
 - Short- vs long-run effects
 - Do small changes open way to larger changes “outside the CBO window”

How Much Can We Put on Beneficiaries

- Income:
 - Median: \$26,200; 25% have <\$15,300
- Savings (excludes home equity):
 - Median: \$74,500; 25% have <\$14,600
- Liable for: Medicare cost-sharing, LTC costs, dental, hearing, vision

Already Carry Significant Burden

- 27% of Medicare enrollees spent 20% or more of income on health care + premiums

Kaiser 2015 Survey:

Last 12 months, spent less on food, heat, other basic needs to pay for health care

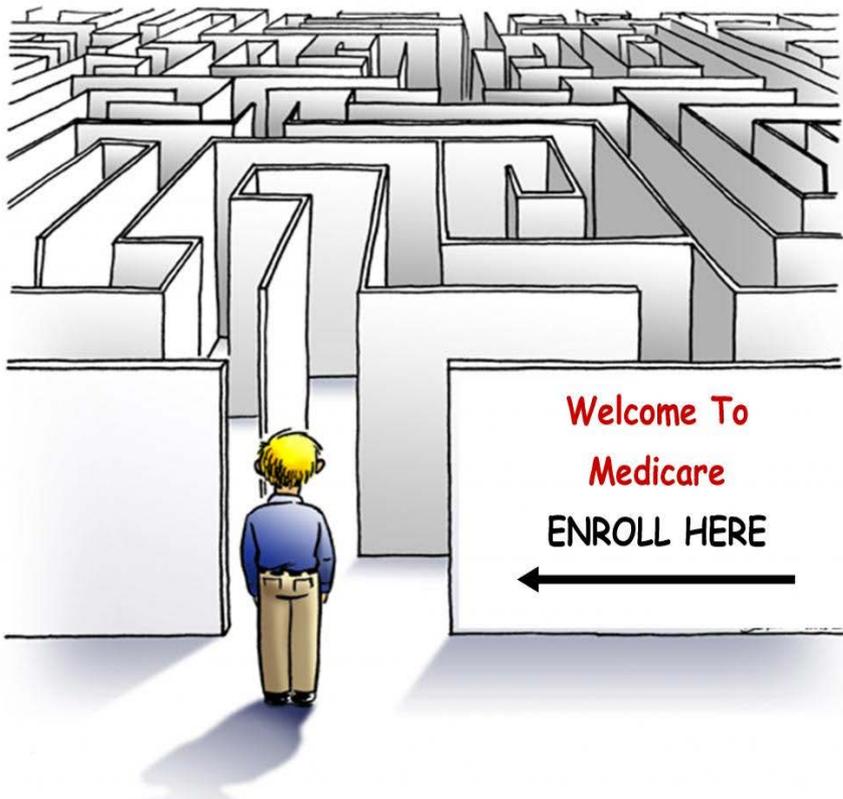


Yes

No

Some Promising Policies

- A bipartisan bill to improve care for people with chronic conditions
 - Address high-need and high-cost population



- Improve enrollment for Medicare beneficiaries

Thank you!

For more information:

Lina Walker

lwalker@aarp.org



Real Possibilities

**Public Policy
Institute**