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Protecting A Lifetime Of Memories

Where Your Retirement Dreams Become Reality...

Understanding Medicare Pt. 1

Medicare is our country's Federal health insurance program for people age 65 and older. Though it is available earlier to people with certain disabilities, permanent kidney failure, or Lou Gehrig's Disease. Medicare is funded primarily through payroll taxes, but also through premiums usually deducted from Social Security Income checks. Medicare is designed to help with the cost of health care, but it doesn't cover all medical expenses or the cost of most long-term care. There are 4 parts of Medicare; they are denoted by letters ("Part A"-"Part D") and each covers a specific area. When signing up for Medicare you have the freedom to choose what parts you want to sign up for. However, to be eligible for Part C (Medicare Advantage) or Medigap, you must have both Part A & Part B.

Important note: While Social Security's full retirement has been delayed, Medicare's has not. Therefore you should apply for Medicare 3 months before you qualify (either your 65th birthday or other qualifying condition). For a full list of early eligibility, please visit www.socialsecurity.gov. If you are low income and are having trouble paying Medicare premiums some states do offer assistance. For more information on those programs visit www.medicare.gov and find the tab titled, "Your Medicare Costs" and find "Get help paying costs."

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The Secret To Never Running Out Of Money

As people around the world continue to live longer, it has become necessary to better prepare for the years of retirement. With this increased lifespan, healthy individuals can expect to live well past age 65. When an individual has ceased working, the need to provide some sort of steady income becomes important. Making wise investments, such as purchasing annuities, becomes an important part of the long-range plan for a successful retirement.

Annuities can be confusing and many would-be investors often confuse annuities with life insurance. An annuity is an investment contract or policy between an individual and a life insurance company. Simply put, the investor buys life insurance in case they die too early and he purchases an annuity in the event that he lives too long. While that may seem silly, the fact remains that many individuals aren't financially prepared for the years following retirement. Annuities can help.

Different needs and budgets dictate the purchase of different varieties of annuities. If you need income now, you should consider investing in an immediate annuity. In this instance, the investor pays the insurer a lump sum of money in exchange for receiving income for a set period of time or for as long as he/she lives. You'll usually start receiving payments immediately after transferring funds into this type of annuity.

If you're looking for a long-term retirement savings vehicle, the deferred annuity should be your financial tool of choice. Deferred annuities build savings on a tax-deferred basis.



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Interesting Facts:

- -Soccer players run on average as many as 6 miles during the course of a game.
- -Red wine will spoil if exposed to light; hence tinted bottles.
- -One quarter of the bones in the human body are in the feet.
- -Dogs and cats, like humans, are either right or left handed (paw).
- -You burn more calories sleeping than you do watching TV.
- -It is not allowed to have living US presidents featured on US currency.

Tired Of Losing Money?

Now you can get stock market type returns without the stock market risks.

Plus, it offers tax deferred interest and tax-free income at retirement.

> Call Our Office Today for More Information!

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Are you unnecessarily paying income taxes on your social security call now for your FREE report
"How to Stop the Taxation of Your Social Security Income"
Call now while supplies last.

"There are two ways of spreading light: to be the candle or the mirror that reflects it."
-Edith Wharton

FAQ

How often should I review my policy?

You should review all of your insurance policies at least once a year to make sure they measure up to your current needs. If you have a major life change, you should contact your insurance agent or company representative ASAP. The change in your life may have a significant impact on your insurance needs.

Life changes may include:

- Marriage or divorce
- A child or grandchild who is born or adopted
- Significant changes in your health or that of your spouse/domestic partner
- Taking on the financial responsibility of an aging parent
- Purchasing a new home
- A loved one who requires long-term care
- Refinancing your home
- Coming into an inheritance
- Any other financial hardship

These are just a sample of the life changes! Don't get caught off guard; make sure you have the coverage you want and need!

Understanding Medicare Pt. 1

Medicare Part A (hospital insurance) helps pay for inpatient care in a hospital or skilled nursing facility (following a hospital stay). Part A also pays for some home health care, and hospice care. Most people receive Part A at no cost, because we pay into the system during our workings years, but those who don't can pay a monthly premium to receive it.

Medicare Part B (medical insurance) helps pay for services from doctors and other health care providers, outpatient care, home health care, durable medical equipment, cancer screenings & chemotherapy, and some preventive services. Medicare Part B requires you to pay a monthly premium. These premiums are set each year but do have income brackets, which are based on your income from the 2 years prior.

Medicare Part D (Medicare prescription drug coverage) helps cover the cost of prescription drugs. Anyone who has Part A or Part B is eligible for Part D. It is voluntary and does cost an extra monthly premium though. This can be a stand-alone plan or built into a Medicare Advantage. It's important to note that even though it is voluntary, if you don't sign up for it immediately, you will have to wait for the annual enrollment period, and have a late enrollment penalty.

Medicare Part C ("Medicare Advantage") is an alternative to "Original Medicare" and includes all benefits and services covered under Part A and Part B. Some plans include Medicare prescription drug coverage (Medicare Part D) and other extra benefits and services. You cannot have both Medicare Advantage and Medigap policies. You have to choose one or the other. You can obtain Part C from a Medicare Advantage organization or other private company approved by Medicare. Anyone who does choose, has a 12 month trial-right period, which they can use to purchase a Medigap policy instead.

In addition to the 4 different parts of Medicare there is also an additional private option known as Medicare Supplement policies or "Medigap" policies. Medigap policies are used to cover the expenses that normal Medicare does not. Read next month's issue for a full comparison of Medigap policies and Medicare Advantage.

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You'll also need to decide whether you prefer a fixed-rate, indexed or a variable annuity. Those who prefer not to take a risk with their dollars may choose the fixed rate, which provides a stable and guaranteed rate of return. The variable annuity involves investing your money in the stock or bond market, therefore assuming a higher financial risk in favor of a more profitable rate of return. Younger investors who have more time to save often choose this type of annuity. The indexed annuity provides the best of both world, with principal guarantees and the upside of the stock market without the downside risk! You can't lose money.

These products can be purchased through insurance agents, financial planners, and banks. However, only life insurance companies issue the policies. If you're shopping for this type of investment, be sure to make your purchase through someone who is well-versed in the specifics of these investments and will take the time to speak with you so that he/she may recommend the right annuity for your needs.

To review your plan and make sure you never run out of money. Call my office today!

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