



## How Medicare's Beneficiary Ombudsman is Working For You

The Medicare Beneficiary Ombudsman works to ensure that people with Medicare get the information and help they need to understand their Medicare options, and to apply their rights and protections. The Ombudsman may identify issues and problems in payment and coverage policies, but doesn't advocate for any increases in program payments or new coverage of services.

The Medicare Ombudsman works to ensure that existing Medicare information, counseling and assistance resources work the way they should to help you with your complaints, appeals, grievances, or questions about Medicare.

There are many ways you can get Medicare information or have your Medicare-related problems resolved. The Medicare Ombudsman works with the organizations responsible for meeting these needs to be sure they work effectively.

### The Medicare Ombudsman

- provides these organizations with expected standards for effective and efficient performance.
- gathers information to measure how well your needs are met and whether you have the information you need to make good health care decisions.
- shares information about what works well, and what doesn't work well, to continuously improve the quality of the services and care you get through Medicare.
- reports problems and makes recommendations for improvement to Congress.
- works to ensure that the needs of all people with Medicare are served by its programs.



## **The Medicare Ombudsman will work to make sure the organizations that should resolve your problems are prompt in their response if you**

- need help to file an appeal. You file an appeal if a service or item you received isn't covered, and you think it should be; a service or item is denied and you think it should be paid; or you question the amount that Medicare paid.
- have a problem joining or leaving a Medicare Advantage Plan (like an HMO or PPO) or other Medicare Health Plan, or Medicare Prescription Drug Plan.
- have questions about Medicare premiums.
- need help understanding your Medicare rights and protections.

### **For More Information**

- Visit [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov) on the web.
- Call your Quality Improvement Organization if you have a complaint about the quality of Medicare-covered services. Visit [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov), or call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227) to get their telephone number. TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.
- Call your State Health Insurance Assistance Program for help with questions about appeals, buying other insurance, choosing a Medicare health or prescription drug plan, buying a Medigap policy, and Medicare rights and protections. You can find their telephone number in your copy of the "Medicare & You" handbook. Or, visit [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov) or call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227) to get their telephone number. TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.
- Coming in 2006—The Office of the Medicare Ombudsman will have a link on [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov) that you can use to ask questions and submit complaints about Medicare.