

Seize the opportunity:

Navigate the 2026 CMS changes to Medicare Advantage with confidence



Is your strategy robust enough to meet the new CMS challenges? Are you prepared to turn impending changes into a strategic advantage?

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has proposed significant changes to Medicare Advantage (MA) plans going into effect for 2026. These changes are poised to reshape the landscape of healthcare delivery and reimbursement, making it crucial for stakeholders to act swiftly and decisively.

How these changes affect your plan will depend on how you prepare. Failing to adapt could result in financial losses, decreased market share, and compromised patient care. Conversely, those who navigate these changes effectively stand to gain a significant competitive edge.

Increased payments: Proposed 4.3% increase (over \$21B) in MA payments to plans on average year-over-year in CY 2026

<p>What this does</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides expanded resources to enhance the quality and breadth of services and improve care for beneficiaries Affords greater financial stability so plans can better manage costs and invest in long-term improvements 	<p>How MA Plans should prepare</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formulate a plan for managing funds, focusing on programs and services that will have the greatest impact on quality. Evaluate resource allocation needed to execute on quality improvement investments.
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Improved access to care: Policies enacted to reduce barriers caused by inappropriate use of prior authorizations and artificial intelligence (AI) in healthcare decisions

<p>What this does</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sets clearer requirements to ensure MA plans are not using internal criteria that go beyond standard Medicare coverage Ensures the use of AI does not create barriers to accessing health services 	<p>How MA Plans should prepare</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review current prior authorization processes for transparency and non-compliance with proposed regulations. Prepare for additional training needed to comply with new standards for prior authorization and AI usage.
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Expanded coverage: Aims to improve the quality, accessibility and affordability of care for beneficiaries

<p>What this does</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows coverage for anti-obesity medications Enhances behavioral health services Improves access to preventative services like vaccines Caps the cost of insulin at \$35/month Expands supplemental benefits such as dental, vision and hearing services 	<p>How MA Plans should prepare</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess the potential for plan design adjustments and allocation of rebate dollars Examine behavioral health provider networks for coverage adequacy and likely expansion of contracts Ensure processes are in place for identifying missing annual wellness visits and preventative care
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Enhanced quality: Updates made to the MA Star Rating system to ensure MA and Part D plans compete on quality

<p>What this does</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Holds MA plans more accountable for delivering high-quality care Helps beneficiaries choose high-quality plans 	<p>How MA Plans should prepare</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare an action plan for improving or maintaining Star ratings Forecast revenue for possible investment in new initiatives to meet higher quality standards
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The future of Medicare Advantage is being shaped today—ensure your organization is leading the charge. With the right strategies, MA plans can turn potential compliance burdens into competitive advantages. Now is the time to act decisively, innovate boldly, and position your organization at the forefront of this evolving landscape. Here are your immediate next steps:

- 1 Assess your analytics readiness to take action:**

MA plans will need strategic insights into quality measure performance, gaps in care, provider network adequacy and performance, and provider payments to ensure quality.

Partner with the right vendor to enable a unified analytics platform that facilitates action based on insights.
- 2 Develop strategic goals and initiatives for compliance:**

Tracking and ensuring accountability for execution of strategic action plans to respond to the regulatory impacts can be a full-time job.

With the right technology, MA plans can streamline this process by leveraging playbooks that guide next steps.
- 3 Seek guidance on a strategic framework:**

Knowing where there are opportunities for improvement and the steps needed to maintain compliance with the regulations can be time-consuming and require specialized skills.

Working with a strategic consulting partner can pay significant dividends in terms of resource allocation and ROI.



Don't navigate these changes alone. MedeAnalytics **Strategic Advisory** can help guide you through these changes with confidence and precision.

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