

CLINTON GORE

President Clinton Safeguarding and Strengthening Medicare and Medicaid

"[We] must preserve the basic protections Medicare and Medicaid give, not just to the poor, but to people in working families, including children, people with disabilities, people living with AIDS, and senior citizens in nursing homes ... [We] cannot abandon our fundamental obligations to the people who need Medicare and Medicaid. America cannot become stronger if they become weaker."

President Bill Clinton

President Clinton is fighting to protect **Medicare** so that our seniors -- regardless of their incomes -- can continue to live with security and dignity. The President's balanced budget proposal preserves and improves **Medicare** by:

- Preserving health care benefits for 37 million elderly and disabled Medicare beneficiaries without imposing new increases in their premiums. The President's budget also ensures the fiscal integrity of the Medicare Trust Fund through the next decade, while saving \$124 billion over the next seven years;
- Broadening health plan choices available to Medicare beneficiaries. In addition to traditional fee-for-service plans, the President has encouraged the availability of other high-quality, cost-effective options, including preferred provider organizations, point-of-service health maintenance organizations (HMOs), and provider service networks. In unprecedented numbers, Medicare beneficiaries are now choosing to enroll in managed care plans;
- Lengthening -- beyond the current limit of 65 1/2 years of age -- the time period during which carriers must offer supplemental Medigap policies to Medicare beneficiaries. Beneficiaries who wish to exit managed care plans in favor of traditional fee-for-service plans can do so at any time;
- Launching initiatives to ensure quality in managed care: Department of Health and Human Services Interagency Managed Care Forum, the Medicare Managed Care Quality Improvement Project, and the Medicare and Medicaid Health Plan Employer Data Information Set (HEDIS);
- Enhancing preventive services and long-term care offered by Medicare, including mammography and colorectal screening, and establishing programs for diabetes management and respite care for families of beneficiaries with Alzheimer's disease;
- Ensuring funding for medical education and training to the nation's academic health centers and other teaching and research institutions;

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- Shifting regulations from contrived, process-based to common-sense, outcome-based measures. By eliminating 11 million physician attestation forms each year, physician time with patients has increased by 200,000 hours, and administrative costs have decreased by \$22,500 per hospital; and
- Saving taxpayers \$15 billion by combating fraud and abuse.

It is our nation's fundamental commitment to continue to make health care available for low-income children and their families, the elderly, pregnant women, and individuals with disabilities. President Clinton is working to maintain the federal guarantee of **Medicaid** by:

- Proposing a balanced budget that protects the safety net for working Americans who face catastrophic illness or injury. While saving \$59 billion over the next seven years, the President's budget guarantees that Medicaid will continue to provide health care benefits for over 15 million children in working families and over 20 million other Americans, including pregnant women, older Americans, and people with disabilities;
- Guaranteeing benefits for nursing home residents. The President is defending the continued federal enforcement of uniform quality standards for the nation's nursing homes;
- Working to retain protections against the impoverishment of the spouses or adult children of nursing home residents. The President is also working to guarantee that Medicaid will continue to pay for the Medicare premiums of low-income beneficiaries;
- Working to give states unprecedented flexibility in establishing their own Medicaid plans. The President wants the federal government to retain its financial commitment to the states, while controlling costs with a per capita limit on expenditures;
- Ensuring quality in managed care with programs that address the abuses that result in the failure to provide this care. Included are the Quality Assurance Reform Initiative and the Medicaid Health Plan Employer Data Information Set (HEDIS); and
- Simplifying the Medicaid home- and community-based waiver process. Overall, regulations involving Medicaid have been reduced by 25 percent.

Building on Our Progress

President Clinton will not back down from protecting Medicare and Medicaid. He will continue to insist that we can balance the budget without abandoning our fundamental values -- or our obligations to our families.

*President Clinton and Vice President Gore
Meeting America's Challenges ★ Protecting Our Values*

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