

Medicare Maladies

A Series that Exposes the Dangerous Elements of the Medicare Bill currently in Committee

MM #55: Medicare By The Numbers

When you're talking Medicare, you're talking numbers. Here are some figures lawmakers should know as they work on a compromise Medicare bill to send to President Bush:

38. The number of years Medicare has existed without serious reforms.

77, 000,000. The number of baby boomers who will retire starting in 2011.

\$400,000,000,000. The minimum estimate to pay for a plan that offers prescription drugs to all Medicare patients in the first 10 years.

\$2,000,000,000,000. What The Heritage Foundation estimates to be the cost of a Medicare prescription drug entitlement by 2030.

4,000. The number of government employees who run Medicare.

43. The number of years the Federal Employee Health Benefits Program (FEHBP), the best model for Medicare reform, has existed with multiple health plans, patient choice and solid prescription drug coverage.

9,000,000. The estimated number of federal retirees, workers and family members covered under FEHBP.

160. The number of federal workers who run FEHBP.

1. The number of chances lawmakers have to get this right before it's too late.

Find more Medicare numbers at heritage.org.

For more information or to receive an e-mail version of "Medicare Maladies," contact medicaremaladies@heritage.org or call Heritage Media Services at (202) 675-1761.

("Medicare Maladies" is a regular feature, launched 7/14/03, from The Heritage Foundation. Sad to say, there's another malady coming your way tomorrow. Daily "maladies" are also available on heritage.org.)