

Ossen Medicare Outreach, Education and Advocacy Project

Did you know Medicare can cover the health care you need in order to stay in your home?

Medicare covers certain health care provided at home when an individual is unable to leave home without help and has a doctor's order for home care that includes skilled nursing and therapy. There is no time limit to coverage as long as the individual continues to need help leaving home and needs skilled nursing or therapy. When these standards are met, Medicare also covers care provided by home health aides.

For quite some time, the Medicare home health benefit has been misunderstood and underutilized. People are often told Medicare will not pay if a person's condition is not "improving." This is not true! Medicare is available for skilled nursing and therapy intended to maintain a person's condition, prevent deterioration, or slow decline.

The Center for Medicare Advocacy in partnership with the Jeffrey P. Ossen Family Foundation, is working to spread the word and help people in the greater Windham area get access to Medicare and the necessary home care they need.

What services are covered under the Medicare home health benefit?

- Skilled nursing
- Home health aides for up to 28 hours a week combined with skilled nursing care (in some cases, up to 35 hours a week, if needed, as documented by the doctor)
- Skilled physical therapy, occupational therapy and speech language pathology services
- Medical social services
- Medical supplies

Helpful Tips:

- Family members cannot be required to help provide care in order for the patient to receive Medicare coverage.
- Home health agencies must submit a claim to Medicare upon the request of a beneficiary. A claim decision is required in order to appeal.
- A new rule prohibits agencies from discontinuing services without a doctor's order.
- The doctor is the patient's most important ally.

The Center for Medicare Advocacy has developed numerous resources including brochures, checklists, and infographic, to help beneficiaries, and those who help beneficiaries, understand and access Medicare home health coverage. These resources are available at www.MedicareAdvocacy.org/Ossen/.

The Center for Medicare Advocacy is available to provide guidance, at (860)456-7790. The organization's website has a great deal of information that may also be helpful, at www.MedicareAdvocacy.org.