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Ms. Moore plans to retire when she turns 65 in a few months. She is in excellent health and will have considerable income when she retires. She is concerned that her income will make it impossible for her to qualify for Medicare. What could you tell her to address her concern? - Medicare is a program for people age 65 or older and those under age 65 with certain disabilities, end stage renal disease and Lou Gehrig's disease, so she will be eligible for Medicare.

Mr. Schmidt would like to plan for retirement and has asked you what is covered under Original Fee-for-Service (FFS) Medicare? What could you tell him? - Part A, which covers hospital, skilled nursing facility, hospice and home health services and Part B, which covers professional services such as those provided by a doctor are covered under Original Medicare.

Mr. Hernandez is concerned that if he signs up for a Medicare Advantage plan, the health plan may, at some time in the future, reduce his benefits below what is available in Original Medicare. What should you tell him about his concern? - Medicare health plans must cover all benefits available under Medicare Part A and Part B. Many also cover Part D prescription drugs.

Mrs. Roberts has just received a new Medicare identity card in the mail. She is concerned that it is a forgery since it does not have her Social Security number on it. What should you tell her? - The card she received is valid, the change has been made to protect Medicare beneficiaries from identity theft, and she should now destroy her old card.

Mrs. Willard wants to know generally how the benefits under Original Medicare might compare to the benefit package of a Medicare Health Plan before she starts looking at specific plans. What could you tell her? - Medicare Health Plans may offer extra benefits that Original Medicare does not offer such as vision, hearing, and dental services and must include a maximum out-of-pocket limit on Part A and Part B services.

Mr. Meoni's wife has a Medicare Advantage plan, but he wants to understand what coverage Medicare Supplemental Insurance provides since his health care needs are different from his wife's needs. What could you tell Mr.Meoni? - Medicare Supplemental Insurance would help cover his Part A and Part B cost sharing in Original Fee-for-Service (FFS) Medicare as well as possibly some services that Medicare does not cover.

Mrs. Chen will be 65 soon, has been a citizen for twelve years, has been employed full time, and paid taxes during that entire period. She is concerned that she will not qualify for coverage under part A because she was not born in the United States. What should

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you tell her? - Most individuals who are citizens and over age 65 are covered under Part A by virtue of having paid Medicare taxes while working, though some may be covered as a result of paying monthly premiums.

Mr. Bauer is 49 years old, but eighteen months ago he was declared disabled by the Social Security Administration and has been receiving disability payments. He is wondering whether he can obtain coverage under Medicare. What should you tell him? - After receiving such disability payments for 24 months, he will be automatically enrolled in Medicare, regardless of age.

Mr. Denton is 52 years old and has recently been diagnosed with end-stage renal disease (ESRD) and will soon begin dialysis. He is wondering if he can obtain coverage under Medicare. What should you tell him? - He may sign-up for Medicare at any time however coverage usually begins on the fourth month after dialysis treatments start.

Ms. Henderson believes that she will qualify for Medicare coverage when she turns 65, without paying any premiums, because she has been working for 40 years and paying Medicare taxes. What should you tell her? - In order to obtain Part B coverage, she must pay a standard monthly premium, though it is higher for individuals with higher incomes.

Mr. Diaz continued working with his company and was insured under his employer's group plan until he reached age 68. He has heard that there is a premium penalty for those who did not sign up for Part B when first eligible and wants to know how much he will have to pay. What should you tell him? - Mr. Diaz will not pay any penalty because he had continuous coverage under his employer's plan.

Mrs. Peňa is 66 years old, has coverage under an employer plan and will retire next year. She heard she must enroll in Part B at the beginning of the year to ensure no gap in coverage. What can you tell her? - She may enroll at any time while she is covered under her employer plan, but she will have a special eight-month enrollment period that differs from the standard general enrollment period, during which she may enroll in Medicare Part B.

Mrs. Kelly, age 65, is entitled to Part A, but has not yet enrolled in Part B. She is considering enrollment in a Medicare health plan (Part C). What should you advise her to do before she will be able to enroll into a Medicare health plan? - In order to join a Medicare health plan, she also must enroll in Part B.

Mrs. Park is an elderly retiree. She has a low, fixed income. What could you tell Mrs. Park that might be of assistance? - She should contact her state Medicaid agency to see if she qualifies for one of several programs that can help with Medicare costs for which she is responsible.

Mr. Wu is eligible for Medicare. He has limited financial resources but failed to qualify for the Part D low-income subsidy. Where might he turn for help with his prescription drug costs? - Mr. Wu may still qualify for help in paying Part D costs through his State Pharmaceutical Assistance Program.

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Mr. Patel is in good health and is preparing a budget in anticipation of his retirement when he turns 66. He wants to understand the health care costs he might be exposed to under Medicare if he were to require hospitalization as a result of an illness. In general terms, what could you tell him about his costs for inpatient hospital services under Original Medicare? - Under Original Medicare, there is a single deductible amount due for the first 60 days of any inpatient hospital stay, after which it converts into a per-day coinsurance amount through day 90. After day 90, he would pay a daily amount up to 60 days over his lifetime, after which he would be responsible for all costs

Mrs. Shields is covered by Original Medicare. She sustained a hip fracture and is being successfully treated for that condition. However, she and her physicians feel that after her lengthy hospital stay she will need a month or two of nursing and rehabilitative care. What should you tell them about Original Medicare's coverage of care in a skilled nursing facility? - Medicare will cover Mrs. Shields' skilled nursing services provided during the first 20 days of her stay, after which she would have a coinsurance until she has been in the facility for 100 days

Mr. Rainey is experiencing paranoid delusions and his physician feels that he should be hospitalized. What should you tell Mr. Rainey (or his representative) about the length of an inpatient psychiatric hospital stay that Medicare will cover? - Medicare will cover a total of 190 days of inpatient psychiatric care during Mr. Rainey's entire lifetime.

Mrs. Quinn has recently turned 66 and decided after many years of work to begin receiving Social Security benefits. Shortly thereafter Mrs. Quinn received a letter informing her that she has been automatically enrolled in Medicare Part B. She wants to understand what this means. What should you tell Mrs. Quinn? Part B primarily covers physician services. She will be paying a monthly premium and, with the exception of many preventive and screening tests, generally will have 20% co-payments for these services, in addition to an annual deductible.

Mr. Buck has several family members who died from different cancers. He wants to know if Medicare covers cancer screening. What should you tell him? - Medicare covers periodic performance of a range of screening tests that are meant to provide early detection of disease. Mr. Buck will need to check specific tests before obtaining them to see if they will be covered

Mrs. Turner is comparing her employer's retiree insurance to Original Medicare and would like to know which of the following services Original Medicare will cover if the appropriate criteria are met? What could you tell her? - Original Medicare covers ambulance services.

Mrs. Wolf wears glasses and dentures and has enjoyed considerable pain relief from arthritis through acupuncture. She is concerned about whether or not Medicare will cover these items and services. What should you tell her? - Medicare does not cover acupuncture, or, in general, glasses or dentures.

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Mr. Singh would like drug coverage, but does not want to be enrolled into a health plan. What should you tell him? - Mr. Singh can enroll in a stand-alone prescription drug plan and continue to be covered for Part A and Part B services through Original Fee-for-Service Medicare.

Mr. Alonso receives some help paying for his two generic prescription drugs from his employer's retiree coverage, but he wants to compare it to a Part D prescription drug plan. He asks you what costs he would generally expect to encounter when enrolling into a standard Medicare Part D prescription drug plan. What should you tell him? - He generally would pay a monthly premium, annual deductible, and per-prescription cost sharing

Mrs. Geisler's neighbor told her she should look at her Part D options during the annual Medicare enrollment period because features of Part D might have changed. Mrs. Geisler can't remember what Part D is so she called you to ask what her neighbor was talking about. What could you tell her? - Part D covers prescription drugs and she should look at her premiums, formulary, and cost sharing among other factors to see if they have changed.

Mrs. Paterson is concerned about the deductibles and co-payments associated with Original Medicare. What can you tell her about Medigap as an option to address this concern? - Medigap plans help beneficiaries cover coinsurance, co-payments, and/or deductibles for medically necessary services.

Mrs. Gonzalez is enrolled in Original Medicare and has a Medigap policy as well, but it provides no drug coverage. She would like to keep the coverage she has, but replace her existing Medigap plan with one that provides drug coverage. What should you tell her? - Mrs. Gonzalez cannot purchase a Medigap plan that covers drugs, but she could keep her Medigap policy and enroll in a Part D prescription drug plan.

Mr. Kelly has substantial financial means. He enrolled in Original Medicare and purchased a Medigap policy many years ago that offered prescription drug coverage. The prescription drug coverage has not been comparable to that offered by Medicare Part D for several years and despite notification, Mr. Kelly took no action. Which of the following statements best describes what will occur if Mr. Kelly now decides to enroll in Medicare Part D? - He will incur a late enrollment penalty

Mr. Capadona would like to purchase a Medicare Advantage (MA) plan and a Medigap plan to pick up costs not covered by that plan. What should you tell him? - It is illegal for you to sell Mr. Capadona a Medigap plan if he is enrolled in an MA plan, and besides, Medigap only works with Original Medicare.

What impact, if any, will the Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act of 2015 (MACRA) have upon Medigap plans? - The Part B deductible will no longer be covered for individuals newly eligible for Medicare starting January 1, 2020.