Great Minds (and One Bald Guy):
From Insights to Impact
Candid Conversations about Tough Topics Facing Independent Agents and Advisors

Season 1: Episode 1

Episode Title: Weathering the Storm: Shifting Market Dynamics Impacting the 2025 Medicare AEP

Thank you to our experts who contributed to this conversation:
Kris Lopez, National Medicare & Health Sales Director, IFC National Marketing
Mike Daly, Vice President of National Sales Distribution and Growth, Medica Health Plans,
Tom Wright, Director of Health and Medicare, Golden Care

Moderated by: **Todd Villeneuve,** Managing Partner, IFC National Marketing

1966:

- Medicare was born.
- Original Medicare premium = $3.00.
- Original Medicare deductible = $40.00.
- President Harry S. Truman and his wife, Bess were the first Medicare beneficiaries.
- 19 million people signed up for Medicare that first year.

1970s to 1980s:

- Managed care was born.

Early 1990s:

- Medicare Advantage began with the CHOICE program.

Early 2000s:

- Medicare Modernization Act gave birth to Medicare Part C and Medicare Part D.
- Pharmacy costs averaged 10% of every healthcare dollar.
- TPMOs were introduced (late 1990s to early 2000s).

2007:

- Star ratings were introduced.

2018:

- The 48-hour rule took effect for agents.

2020:

- Covid Pandemic.
- Scope of Appointments requirement is introduced.

2021:

- Call recording requirement takes effect.

2022:

- Inflation Reduction Act.
- Lowered the maximum out of pocket cost for those highest utilizers of prescription drugs from $5,000 down to $2,000.
- Nearly 65 million Medicare beneficiaries.

Today-National:

- Landscape is mixed and varies by state.
- 10,000+ people a day turn 65.
- Pharmacy costs average 25% of every healthcare dollar. Available options include:
  - Original Medicare
  - Medicare Advantage
  - Medicare Supplement
  - Medicare Part D
  - Medicare Part C
- 67.3 million Medicare beneficiaries.

Today-Minnesota:

Available options include:
- Original Medicare
- Medicare Advantage prescription drug plans
- HMOs
- Managed care PPOs
- Medicare cost plans
- Medicare Advantage private fee-for-service options
- Specialized plans, like CSNPs or DSNPs
- Dual-eligibility plans like MSHO.
- High-deductible Medicare Part F plans
- Medicare Part N
- Medicare Part KL

- UCare stops paying commissions; pulls out of the market, leaving 158,000 without coverage.
- All major carriers follow suit and reduce or eliminate commissions and products.

The Agent/Broker Distribution Channel

		Commissionable	Non-commissionable	Details
Ucare				
	Medicare Advantage		No longer offering as of January 1, 2026	
	Medicare Supplement		Continue to offer products in the market.	
	MSHO			Only sold through County Human Services.
Medica	Medicare Advantage/Cost Plans	New to Medicare/Age-ins - all counties at 2026 FMV Renewals - for all existing MAPD & Cost members at 2026 FMV Medicare Supplements new & GI - all counties REDUCED MAPD commissionable counties - Dodge, Freeborn, Olmsted, Wabasha, Watonwan	Renewals and Switchers Metro impacted counties are: Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, ScottWashington Impacted counties are: Becker, Beltrami, Benton, Cass, Chippewa, Chisago, Clay, Clearwater, Crow Wing, Douglas, Grant, Hubbard, Isanti, Kandiyohi, Kittson, Lake of the Woods, Mahnomen, Marshall, Morrison, Norman, Otter Tail, Pennington, Polk, Pope, Red Lake, Renville, Roseau, Sherburne, Stearns, Swift, Todd, Wadena, Wilkin, Wright	Payable counties: Aitkin, Anoka, Big Stone, Blue Earth, Brown, Carlton, Carver, Cook, Cottonwood, Dakota, Faribault, Fillmore, Goodhue, Hennepin, Houston, Itasca, Jackson, Kanabec, Koochiching, Lac qui Parle, Lake, Le Sueur, Lincoln, Lyon, Martin, McLeod, Meeker, Mille Lacs, Mower, Murray, Nicollet, Nobles, Pine, Pipestone, Ramsey, Redwood, Rice, Rock, Scott, Sibley, St. Louis, Steele, Stevens, Traverse, Waseca, Washington, Winona, Yellow Medicine
	Medicare Supplement	All counties, including Guarantee Issue		
	MSHO	All counties		

50% of all Medicare sales nationally involve an independent agent or broker.

80% of all Medicare sales in Minnesota involve an independent agent or broker.

Make Your Voice Heard

Many voices are needed to educate political leaders, government officials, health plan leaders, and consumers about how current market dynamics and changes to plan availability and agent commissions could impact Medicare beneficiaries across the state and country. To lend your voice to this issue or to show support for the proposed Independent Broker's Time Act, which is designed to clearly define what a third-party marketing organization (TPMO) is, and to ensure independent agents are not lumped in with offshore call centers or lead generators that are seen on TV.

NAIFA
belong.naifa.org

NABIP
nabip.org/looking-for-an-agent

Find your state representative
www.gis.lcc.mn.gov/iMaps/districts

Finding Security in the Storm

Learn about cross-selling opportunities that will help you generate revenue, protect your book of business, and weather the Medicare storm. Register to watch Medicare AEP webinar and access sales resources and support from IFC National Marketing: https://ifcnationalmarketing.com/aep-webinar-2025/

Watch Season 1/ Episode 1
youtube.com/watch?v=WZlcm-LHTw8

Contact IFC at health@ifcnationalmarketing.com or call 800-598-5560.

©2025 IFC National Marketing.
All Rights Reserved