

Cost Sharing Support for Part B Services Benefit Enhancement

Medicare services often have some amount of cost sharing that beneficiaries are responsible for (e.g., copayments, coinsurance, and deductibles) when they receive health care services. CMS allows some Next Generation Accountable Care Organization (ACO) providers to reduce or eliminate cost sharing amounts for certain Medicare Part B services for beneficiaries associated with a Next Generation ACO. The main goal of this benefit is to allow the Next Generation ACO to reduce financial barriers for beneficiaries, allowing those beneficiaries to better follow treatment plans thereby improving their health outcomes.

For more details about this benefit, please find information in the frequently asked questions (FAQs) below.

Cost Sharing Support for Part B Services & What it Means for You

Q1. How do I know if I am a beneficiary associated with a Next Generation ACO and if I can receive this benefit?

A1. Medicare beneficiaries who receive care from a doctor participating in a Next Generation ACO should receive a letter from the ACO notifying them that they are associated with an ACO.

You can also call 1-800-MEDICARE to ask whether you are associated with a Next Generation ACO. If you are interested in learning more about eligibility for this cost sharing benefit, contact your doctor or your Next Generation ACO.

Q2. What are Medicare Part B services for purposes of the Cost Sharing for Part B Services Benefit Enhancement?

A2. Medicare Part B covers a wide variety of items and services including outpatient care, preventive services such as vaccines, therapy, home health, ambulance services, and more. However, drugs and durable medical equipment cannot qualify for cost sharing support under this benefit. The Next Generation ACO designates the Part B services for which it will provide cost sharing support.

Q3. Can a Next Generation ACO elect to pay for my cost sharing on drugs, like injectable medications, or medical equipment?

A3: No; the Cost Sharing Support for Part B Services Benefit Enhancement is not available for items such as Part B drugs or durable medical equipment. The Cost Sharing Support for Part B Services Benefit Enhancement can only be used to cover cost sharing expenses for other Part B services provided by the Next Generation ACO providers and not items. To find out how your Next Generation ACO is implementing this benefit or what cost sharing support may be available, please contact your ACO or your doctor.

Q4. Are all Next Generation ACO beneficiaries eligible to receive cost sharing support for Medicare Part B services?

A4. The Cost Sharing Support for Part B Services Benefit Enhancement is available to Next Generation ACO beneficiaries identified in the Next Generation ACO's CMS approved plan. Eligible beneficiaries may include, without limitation, one or more of the following:

- Beneficiaries without Medicare supplemental insurance (i.e., Medigap).
- Beneficiaries experiencing high health care costs.
- Beneficiaries who require certain Part B services, the receipt of which could reduce the individual's overall health care costs.

How each ACO implements the benefit can vary. To find out how your ACO is implementing this benefit and what programs are available, please contact your ACO.

Q5. If I'm eligible to receive cost sharing support for a service from a Next Generation provider who is participating in this benefit, will I have any out-of-pocket expenses?

A5: Each Next Generation ACO develops their own unique plan(s), specific to the needs of its beneficiaries. This means that the Cost Sharing Support Benefit Enhancement will be different for each ACO (including which beneficiaries are eligible, and which services are eligible). Depending on the Next Generation ACO's Medicare-approved plan, they may be covering all or part of your cost sharing expenses for certain Part B services. To find out how your ACO is implementing this benefit or what cost sharing benefits may be available, please contact your ACO or your doctor.