



Mature Market

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***SINCE YOU CARE: MEDICARE AND MEDICAID PROGRAMS – THE BASICS
FREE TO THE PUBLIC FROM THE METLIFE MATURE MARKET INSTITUTE***

Offers Information and Resources on Government-Sponsored Health Insurance Programs

(Westport, CT – August 23, 2005) – Those who are retired or close to retirement age may be well aware that Medicare and Medicaid are government-sponsored health care programs, but many don't know the specifics of who's eligible and what benefits may be provided.

To help explain both programs, the MetLife Mature Market Institute, in cooperation with the National Alliance for Caregiving, is making its latest guide, *Since You Care: Medicare and Medicaid Programs – The Basics*, available free to the public.

The publication has a great deal of information to distinguish the two programs and contains details about each. It explains that Medicare is a form of health care coverage for individuals and their spouses 65 and over, if one of the two has worked 40 or more quarters in Medicare-covered employment. (People under age 65 with certain disabilities are also eligible for Medicare.) Medicaid, on the other hand, pays for medical and long-term care for individuals of any age who have low incomes and few assets, with eligibility determined by each state.

“Knowing if you are -- or will be -- covered by Medicare or Medicaid can be confusing,” said Sandra Timmermann, Ed.D., director of the MetLife Mature Market Institute. “Those planning for retirement would do well to research their Medicare/Medicaid eligibility and to prepare for any additional coverage that may be necessary.

“While Medicaid is generally available only to those with low incomes, the majority of older Americans will be covered by Medicare if they or their spouse were in the workforce for a certain number of years. Medicare is not all-inclusive, however. Supplemental medical insurance may be needed and people should be aware that Medicare does have premiums and deductibles. Also, Medicare does not cover extended long-term care for those with chronic conditions requiring day-to-day assistance.”

The guide answers common questions regarding the difference between Medicare Part A and Medicare Part B. While Part A primarily covers hospitalization and some services in a hospital, Part B, for the most part,

covers medical and other services provided on an outpatient basis. In general, for those receiving Social Security, enrollment in Medicare Part A is automatic, effective the month a person turns 65. Enrollment in Medicare Part B is voluntary. The publication also explains Medicare Advantage, which individuals may select instead of original Medicare Part A and Part B.

Other explanations in the publication include related programs like Medigap, a supplemental type of coverage provided by private insurers and an introduction to the new Medicare prescription drug program. There is also a listing of books, publications and Internet sites to further assist those seeking more detailed information about the programs. A "Medicare Plan Chart" will help beneficiaries in making decisions between Medicare Advantage and original Medicare Part B.

In 2003, 43 million Americans received health care services through Medicaid. Medicare covers some 39 million older adults and disabled Americans. Both programs are administered by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), www.cms.gov, or toll-free, 1-800-633-4227 (TTY: 1-877-486-2048).

The MetLife Mature Market Institute is MetLife's information and policy resource center on issues related to aging, retirement, long-term care and the mature market. The Institute, staffed by gerontologists, provides research, training and education, consultation and information to support MetLife, its corporate customers and business partners.

The National Alliance for Caregiving is a non-profit coalition of 38 national organizations that focus on issues of family caregiving. The Alliance was created to conduct research, do policy analysis, develop national programs and increase public awareness of family caregiving issues.

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For a free copy of MetLife's *Since You Care: Medicare and Medicaid Programs – The Basics*, please write to the MetLife Mature Market Institute, 57 Greens Farms Road, Westport, CT 06880, call (203) 221-6580 or e-mail: MatureMarketInstitute@metlife.com. This publication and others in the series can also be accessed at <http://www.maturemarketinstitute.com/>.

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