

Talking with a Friend's or Family Member's Doctor During an Appointment

If you help care for a friend or family member with Medicare, you may need to talk to their doctor or other health care provider about their condition or treatment plan during an appointment.

The doctor must get your friend's or family member's permission to talk to you about their care. Ask the doctor's office how your friend or family member can give you permission to talk to their doctor. As long as that person gives permission, the doctor can talk directly with you.

Will Medicare help pay if I talk to the doctor alone?

Yes, as long as your friend or family member gives the doctor permission to talk to you. During their medically necessary appointment, the doctor can spend time talking to you about the condition or treatment plan for your friend or family member, even if they aren't present. The Medicare Part B (Medical Insurance) payment includes the time that the doctor spends talking with you. This means the doctor can't bill Medicare or your friend or family member separately for the time the doctor spent talking to you.

Where can I get Medicare information?

Medicare.gov

Visit [Medicare.gov](https://www.medicare.gov) to help your friend or family member find out what Medicare covers, choose a Medicare health or drug plan, compare nursing homes, get help with billing, find local resources, and more.

Your friend's or family member's secure Medicare account

Visit [Medicare.gov/account](https://www.medicare.gov/account) to get access to personal Medicare information through their Medicare account. They must give you permission to log into their account. You can log into (or create) their secure Medicare account and select "Edit my account settings." Under "My representatives," select "Manage My Representatives." Select "Add Representative" and add your name and address. They can edit a representative's access at any time.

State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP)

SHIPs help people with Medicare and their families make informed Medicare decisions, review coverage, understand costs, and more. Visit shiphelp.org to get your SHIP's phone number or call 1-800-MEDICARE.

1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227)

Get Medicare information 24 hours a day, including weekends. Have your friend's or family member's Medicare card ready when you call. TTY users can call 1-877-486-2048.

Important: Medicare can only give you personal health information about your friend or family member if they give verbal permission while you're on the phone with Medicare or if they've added you as an authorized representative.

How can I be added as an authorized representative?

Your friend or family member can add you as an authorized representative by filling out the authorization form. You can help your friend or family member complete the "Authorization to Disclose Personal Health Information" form in 1 of 2 ways:

1. Fill out and submit the form online. If you choose this option, you can immediately call and talk on behalf of your friend or family member. You can complete the form in their [Medicare.gov](https://www.Medicare.gov) account. If you need help completing the form online, call 1-800-MEDICARE.
2. Download, print, and fill out the form. Visit [Medicare.gov/basics/forms-publications-mailings/forms](https://www.Medicare.gov/basics/forms-publications-mailings/forms) and select "Get Other Forms." On the "Other Forms" page choose "Allow Medicare to share your health information." Mail the completed, signed form to the mailing address on the form. If you choose this option, you'll generally need to wait a few weeks before you're able to call and talk on behalf of your friend or family member. You can also call 1-800-MEDICARE and ask for help filling out the form. The customer service representative will mail the completed form to your friend or family member to sign and return.



Medicare

You have the right to get Medicare information in an accessible format, like large print, braille, or audio. You also have the right to file a complaint if you feel you've been discriminated against. Visit [Medicare.gov/about-us/accessibility-nondiscrimination-notice](https://www.Medicare.gov/about-us/accessibility-nondiscrimination-notice), or call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227) for more information. TTY users can call 1-877-486-2048.

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