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**Medicare Advantage premiums down 7 percent on average,
enrollment up 10 percent**

Medicare Advantage premiums have fallen by 7 percent on average and enrollment has risen by about 10 percent since this time last year, HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius announced today.

The enrollment numbers confirm projections from last September that enrollment in Medicare Advantage plans would continue to rise and average premiums would continue to fall. Average premiums have fallen from \$33.97 in 2011, to \$31.54 in 2012, while enrollment has risen from 11.7 million in 2011 to 12.8 million in 2012.

“The Medicare Advantage program is stronger than ever,” said Secretary Sebelius. “Premiums are down on average, enrollment is up, and thanks to the Affordable Care Act we have unprecedented new tools to ensure that seniors and people with disabilities are getting the best value out of their coverage.”

In addition to today’s enrollment and premium numbers, there is more evidence that the Medicare Advantage program remains strong:

- On average, there are 26 Medicare Advantage plans to choose from in nearly every county across the country;
- Access to Medicare Advantage remains strong: 99.7 percent of Medicare beneficiaries have access to a Medicare Advantage plan; and
- Since 2010, when the Affordable Care Act was passed, Medicare Advantage premiums have fallen by 16 percent and enrollment has climbed by 17 percent.

“Not only are average premiums lower, but plans are better, with more beneficiaries enrolled in 4 and 5 star plans,” said CMS Acting Administrator Marilyn Tavenner. “The Affordable Care Act has strengthened Medicare Advantage by motivating plans to improve the quality of their coverage.”

In 2012, thanks to the Affordable Care Act, Medicare Advantage plans will start receiving incentives to achieve high quality scores through the use of quality bonus payments. As an extra incentive for high quality performance, CMS is allowing Five-Star Medicare Advantage and Part D plans to continuously market and enroll beneficiaries throughout the year.

To find the most recent publicly available MA and Part D contract and enrollment data, visit:

<https://www.cms.gov/MCRAdvPartDEnrolData/MCESR/list.asp#TopOfPage>.

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Note: All HHS press releases, fact sheets and other press materials are available at <http://www.hhs.gov/news>.