

Medicare Coverage at Rural Health Clinics for Primary Care Services

Background

Clinics that are approved by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) as rural health clinics (RHCs), can provide medical services to People with Medicare. The Rural Health Clinic Services Act of 1977 (Public Law 95-210) was enacted to address an inadequate supply of physicians serving Medicare patients in rural areas and to increase the use of nonphysician practitioners, such as nurse practitioners (NPs) and physician assistants (PAs) in rural areas. However, anyone on Medicare may use an RHC and always ask if the RHC accepts Medicare.

Coverage

- Doctor in-person and telehealth services
- Preventive services, wellness visits, tobacco counseling, and certain vaccinations such as flu, pneumonia, hepatitis B and COVID-19
- Chronic care management: behavioral health integration, psychiatric collaborative care model, advanced care planning, diabetes self-management training, and medical nutrition therapy
- Medical social services and behavioral health services

Payment

- Medicare Part B deductible applies to RHC services and is based on the total charges
- Medicare beneficiary pays the 20% coinsurance amount of the RHC's total charges
 - Patient cost-sharing requirements for most Medicare-covered preventive services are waived and Medicare pays 100% of the costs for these services.
 - No coinsurance or deductible is required for the Welcome to Medicare, annual wellness visit and any covered preventive services recommended with a grade of A or B by the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force
- RHCs may waive the copayment and deductible after a good faith determination has been made that the patient is in financial need.

Where to Locate a Medicare-Approved RHC

Type your state and Rural Health Clinics in your internet search to find a rural health clinic near you or call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227).

Resources

- 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227)
- <https://www.medicare.gov> and <https://www.NGSMedicare.com>
- <https://www.hrsa.gov>
- <https://www.cms.gov>, type Rural Health Clinics in the search box