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## CMS Launches Care Compare-Providing Patients and Caregivers With User-Friendly Decision-Making Platform

Selecting a healthcare facility, provider or course of treatment can be a daunting task for many patients, caretakers and family members. To aid Medicare patients in making the most informed healthcare decisions, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) launched compare pages, which offer consumers useful information about available healthcare options. Previously, CMS launched eight distinct compare websites, including websites dedicated to hospital, home health, nursing home, hospice, inpatient rehabilitation facility, long-term care hospital, doctors and other professionals, and dialysis facility. Recently, however, CMS announced the launch of its new compare tool, [Care Compare](#), which combines the eight distinct compare websites into a single user-friendly tool streamlining the care decision process. With the new Care Compare tool, patients can find and compare providers that meet their specific healthcare needs. Patients will also be able to access information about quality measures consistently presented across all provider types and care settings. As CMS completes its transition to Care Compare, consumers are still able to access the eight distinct compare websites, and CMS will continue to gather feedback from such use to make additional modifications to Care Compare.

Care Compare is designed to work well on both mobile platforms (cellphones and tablets) and desktop or laptop computers. According to CMS, "[e]nhancements [to Care Compare] for mobile use will give practical benefits like accessing the tool using a smartphone can initiate phone calls to providers simply by clicking on the provider's phone number." Care Compare also provides patients with helpful hints and useful guides. A patient searching for a nursing home, for instance, will now have the ability to utilize a checklist with common questions to consider when deciding on a facility.

CMS' new Care Compare website is part of a larger [eMedicare initiative](#) launched in October 2018 to "provide a seamless online health care experience to meet the growing expectations for this generation of Medicare beneficiaries." Other projects launched under the eMedicare initiative include:

- a completely redesigned Medicare Plan Finder Tool for annual open enrollment;
- a "What's Covered" app that tells people what is and isn't covered by traditional Medicare;
- a price transparency tool that lets consumers compare Medicare payments and copayments for certain procedures performed in both hospital outpatient departments and ambulatory surgical centers;
- interactive online decision support to help individuals better understand and evaluate their Medicare coverage options and costs between traditional Medicare and Medicare Advantage;
- an online service that helps estimate out-of-pocket costs based on coverage choices when choosing a Medicare plan;
- a webchat option in Medicare Plan Finder that helps people get on-the-spot support; and
- easy-to-use surveys across Medicare.gov so individuals can continue to offer feedback about their online experiences.

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## Authors



**Susan R. Huntington**  
**Partner**

Hartford, CT | (860) 275-0168

Washington, D.C. | (202) 218-3909

[shuntington@daypitney.com](mailto:shuntington@daypitney.com)