



spotlight on health care

How Does Medicare Affect Your Medical Choices And Privacy?

(NAPSA)—If you pay taxes, sooner or later your life will be affected by Medicare. When you turn 65, you will have to enroll in Medicare's hospital insurance program or lose the Social Security benefits promised to you during your working life. Once enrolled, you'll be subjected to thousands of pages of regulations dictating what types of services are covered

MEDICARE'S MIDLIFE CRISIS



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and not covered, how long you can stay in the hospital, and whether or not you can receive home-care services. If you happen to require home care following a hospital stay, you'll be forced to share emotional, sexual, and financial information with the federal government as part of Medicare's data-collection rules.

These and many other facts are not well known. Medicare is one of the world's largest government health care programs, spending more than \$221 billion in 2000. Its costs are expected to nearly double over the next decade. At the same time, there will be relatively fewer workers paying taxes to support the large Baby Boomer population getting ready to enter the Medicare program.

In a new book titled *Medicare's Midlife Crisis* (Cato Institute, \$8.95), Sue A. Blevins explains how the current Medicare financial crisis came about and how the program affects Americans' choices and privacy. *Medicare's Midlife Crisis* is available on the Web at www.Cato.org and www.Amazon.com; or by calling 1-800-767-1241 (noon-9 pm eastern time).