

The History of Medicare



By White House Press Office - Lyndon Baines Johnson Library (Austin, Texas)

Medicare was signed into law in 1965. The first recipient of the Medicare card was Harry Truman and he received it from Lyndon B. Johnson.

Back in 1965, we did not have all of the different plans that we have today. HMOs, PPOs, POSs, HDHPs, HRAs or HSAs did not exist. The only options available 20 to 25 years ago were the 80/20 plans. Everyone was covered with these plans. If you can remember how these plans work, then you will clearly understand Medicare. Simply put, Medicare will become your insurance company and they're going to pick up 80 percent of covered expenses. You, as an individual, are responsible for the remaining 20 percent of the covered expenses.