



Press Release
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Reeves Regional Health Encourages Seniors to Make Informed Medicare Choices

Hospital urges careful comparison as enrollment continues through December 7

PECOS, Texas (Dec 1, 2025) – With Medicare open enrollment underway, Reeves Regional Health (RRH) is encouraging seniors and their families to take the time to fully understand the differences between Traditional Medicare and privately managed Medicare Advantage plans. Each year, local residents are faced with new advertising, new plan options, and new promises—making it more important than ever to look closely at how each choice affects access to care in rural West Texas.

“We want our seniors to feel confident as they review their Medicare options, because these decisions affect every doctor’s visit, every test, and every hospital stay,” said Brenda McKinney, CEO. “There is a tremendous amount of marketing around Medicare Advantage, and those ads often highlight extras or discounts. But it’s essential to look past the advertising and understand how these plans actually work for your long-term health.”

Traditional Medicare, which is what most individuals paid into their entire working career, remains the most widely accepted coverage across the country and throughout rural communities like Reeves County. The program allows beneficiaries to see any provider who accepts Medicare, without being limited by network restrictions or insurance-company approvals. Because flexibility plays such a vital role in rural healthcare, RRH wants residents to clearly understand how their coverage choices can affect real-world access to care.

“Here in Reeves County, many of our patients have long-standing relationships with their primary care providers,” McKinney said. “Traditional Medicare protects those relationships by allowing patients to choose the doctors and specialists they trust. That continuity matters—especially for those managing chronic conditions, recovering from illness, or simply wanting a consistent healthcare partner as they age.”

Medicare Advantage plans, by contrast, are offered by private insurance companies that assume financial and administrative control over a patient’s care. These plans may include networks that restrict which hospitals or providers a patient may see. They may also require prior authorization for imaging, treatments, medications, or specialist visits. While some individuals find these plans suitable for their needs, many are not aware of the potential limitations until they attempt to schedule services.

McKinney emphasized that Reeves Regional Health does not discourage informed choice—only rushed decisions. “Not all Medicare Advantage plans are harmful or problematic,” she said. “But we do see

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patients who face delays or additional steps because of prior authorizations or network rules. That's why we strongly encourage people to slow down, ask questions, and understand the trade-offs. In many cases, Traditional Medicare provides the most reliable, straightforward access to care in rural areas."

Many seniors are attracted to Medicare Advantage because of advertised extras such as gym memberships or limited dental or vision coverage. Reeves Regional Health acknowledges that these additions can be appealing but encourages residents to view them in the appropriate context. Extra perks may sound valuable, but they do not replace the importance of consistent, dependable medical access.

"One of the most important things I want people to remember is that healthcare is about more than the benefits printed in a brochure," McKinney said. "It's about making sure you can get the care you need, when you need it, from the providers you know. Traditional Medicare tends to provide that access with fewer surprises."

As open enrollment ends December 7, RRH encourages individuals to review coverage carefully—not just for 2025, but for the years ahead. Plan changes can affect specialist availability, referrals, treatment approvals, or costs that arise unexpectedly during major medical events. Seniors are also urged to consider how far they may need to travel for in-network care and whether their preferred providers participate in the plan they're considering.

"Our role at Reeves Regional Health isn't to tell people what to choose," McKinney said. "Our role is to help the community make informed decisions that protect their health. Year after year, we see that Traditional Medicare provides the broadest access, the fewest barriers, and the strongest support for patient-provider decision-making. That's why we encourage seniors to think carefully and consider the long-term stability it offers."

RRH welcomes questions from community members navigating Medicare. Seniors can speak with knowledgeable staff members, visit trusted online resources, or review official Medicare explanations before enrolling or switching plans. The hospital also recommends that residents avoid making decisions based solely on television commercials, celebrity endorsements, or mailed promotional materials.

"To our seniors and caregivers: you've earned access to Medicare through years of hard work," McKinney added. "You deserve coverage that keeps your healthcare decisions in your hands. Take the time to weigh your options carefully, and don't hesitate to reach out if we can help."

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For more information regarding Medicare and healthcare options for individuals ages 65 and older, visit www.choosingmedicare.org. To speak with a representative from Reeves Regional Health about Medicare questions, please call Brenda McKinney, CEO at 432-447-3551, ext. 1125

About Reeves Regional Health

Reeves Regional Health (RRH), a non-profit Level IV Trauma Center in Pecos, Texas, has been caring for Reeves County and surrounding West Texas communities since 1954. In 2022, the hospital opened its new facility, combining modern technology with the warmth of hometown care. In 2025, RRH was recognized as one of the Top 100 Critical Access Hospitals nationwide and also earned National Recognition as a Center of Excellence in Surgical Safety by the Association of periOperative Registered Nurses (AORN).

Our Mission and Vision: We are committed to exceptional care through servant leadership and strive to be the trusted beacon of health in our region—enhancing quality of life through innovation, compassion, and excellence. Guided by our WECARE values—Wellness, Excellence, Compassion, Accountability, Respect, and Equality—we put patients and families at the heart of everything we do.

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