

Medicare Data Enroute to Older Citizens

PERSONS 65 OR OLDER who are receiving social security or railroad retirement benefits will soon have full information about the new "Medicare" program and a card to use in applying for this protection according to Ed Cocks, Social Security district manager in Las Vegas.

The Medicare application form, described by President Johnson as "the simplest form in the history of the government," is now being mailed to two and one-half million beneficiaries across the country each week. With it is a leaflet containing information on the two-part program -- hospital insurance to pay hospital and related expenses, and a voluntary medical insurance plan to help pay doctors' bills.

"Because this huge mailing will be spread over several weeks," Cocks explained, "some people may receive the information tomorrow, while others may not get theirs for more than a month. We hope to reach all beneficiaries by December." The program goes into effect in July of 1966.

All social security and railroad retirement beneficiaries 65 or older qualify automatically for basic hospital insurance benefits. However,

a beneficiary will get the added protection of medical insurance--available at a cost of \$3 per month--ONLY IF HE APPLIES FOR IT. An applicant need merely to check "yes" on the enrollment card, sign his name and return the card in the postage-free envelope which came with it. When the program starts in July, the \$3 premium will be deducted from his benefit check each month.

Cocks emphasized that most people 65 or older who are NOT getting social security or railroad retirement benefits also are eligible for health insurance benefits. They should write, telephone, or visit a social security office to register for hospital insurance benefits and, if they wish, for medical insurance also.

Anyone 65 or older who wants medical insurance protection should enroll no later than March 31, 1966, in order to be covered as soon as the program starts in July, Cocks added. "Additional information on the health insurance programs and other changes in the social security law is available at the social security office in Las Vegas at 601 S. 13th St.," he said.



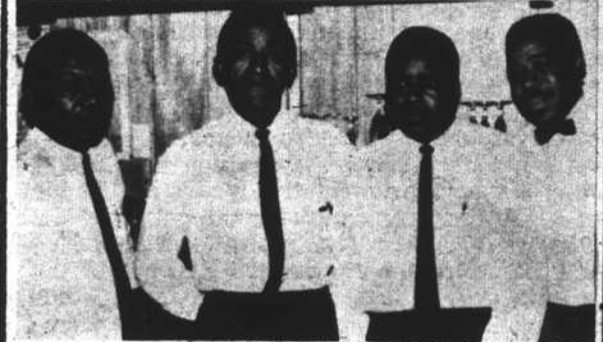
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