The Baby Boomers Age-In
Understanding a New Breed of Medicare Customers

#StartwithHealthy
The oldest of the 75.4 million U.S. Baby Boomers turned 70 in 2016 and, as has happened throughout their lives, this largest generation is making a sizable impact on the world.

Their earliest influences were rock ‘n’ roll music, feminism and the civil rights movement, and now the Baby Boomers are making their presence known again as huge numbers of them begin aging-in to Medicare. The wave that started in 2011 when the first Boomer turned 65 will crest in 2022, the year that will see the most new Age-ins.

To better understand this powerful demographic, let’s explore the psyche of the Age-In Boomer, what’s important to them, and the role of healthcare and insurance in their lives.

Every day, 10,000 Baby Boomers become eligible for Medicare.
Who are the Baby Boomers?

The Baby Boom generation is generally defined as people born between the end of World War II in 1946 and the advent of reliable birth control in 1964. They came of age during a period of differing views on politics, war and social issues. Television had become widely available and, for the first time in history, people watched civil rights protests, the war in Vietnam and the assassination of President Kennedy in their own homes.

Their diversity can be defined by simply listing the U.S. presidents who are Baby Boomers—Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, Barack Obama and Donald Trump are all in this demographic.

The Equal Rights Amendment was one of the major causes championed by members of the Baby Boomer generation.
The current growth of the population ages 65 and older is one of the most significant demographic trends in the history of the United States. With thousands of Baby Boomers turning 65 every month, more than one in five Americans will be in this age group by 2030.\(^7\)

**The Baby Boomers’ effect on demographics**

The Aging of the U.S. Population\(^7\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Under Age 18</th>
<th>Ages 18–64</th>
<th>Ages 65+</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2030 (est.)</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>21%</td>
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With a median age of 66.6 years, Sumter County, Florida is the only county in the U.S. where the median age exceeds retirement age.\(^9\)

51.3% of Baby Boomers have a COLLEGE EDUCATION\(^8\)

84.6% of Age-in prospects live in URBAN OR SUBURBAN AREAS\(^8\)

10.9% of Baby Boomers HAVE ALREADY RETIRED\(^8\)
The generation that sang “I hope I die before I get old” is actually expected to live 15 years longer than people who reached age 70 in 1965.\(^\text{10}\)

During Baby Boomers’ childhoods, the negative effects of smoking were revealed, along with the positive effects of exercise and healthful eating.\(^\text{11}\)

Many Baby Boomers adopted healthy lifestyles and are well informed about their own healthcare. This makes them better able to deal with the common effects of aging, like arthritis, osteoporosis and hypertension.\(^\text{12}\)

Many Boomers are aging gracefully, though not always willingly. They’ve generally stayed fit and healthy, and they expect to work longer and enjoy life more than people in their age group did in previous generations. A big reason for this is advanced healthcare, which is more readily available than ever before. Even patients with chronic health issues have learned how to control their conditions and are pursuing active, healthy lifestyles.\(^\text{13}\)

Ninety-five percent of older Americans’ healthcare costs are for managing their chronic conditions.\(^\text{12}\)
The new face of aging and healthcare

*Many Baby Boomers don’t view themselves as “aging” but rather as evolving through life.*[^14]

They’re going back to school, switching career paths and even stepping into politics. Yet they’ve also watched their parents, siblings and friends get older, and they understand that an unexpected injury or illness can change everything.[^13]

The forces that shaped the Baby Boomers’ early years continue to play a part in who they are today. They are fiercely independent, even as they grow older and get closer to requiring assistance with basic daily needs.[^13]

[^46]: 46% of Age-ins anticipate enrolling in a Medicare Advantage plan next year.[^15]

*Today’s Age-ins want to maintain their current lifestyle as long as possible.*
Shaping a Baby Boomer’s decision

The Internet has become the dominant Medicare shopping channel among Age-ins.15

Even if they’d rather not think about the inevitable, nearly all Age-ins begin thinking about their transition to Medicare as age 65 approaches. Most will receive a notification of eligibility from the government, plus they will be inundated with Medicare ads in the mail, online and by phone.15

Primarily, they want to understand what is covered, how to enroll and which plans are available. While cost and coverage are key in their decision, most also want to be sure their preferred doctors are in-network. They look for coverage on things like exercise programs and foreign travel. In the end, they are influenced by a combination of factors.15

HOW BOOMERS DECIDE15

Online Research  Spouse, Family or Friend  Direct Mail  Insurance Agent

Age-ins’ research into Medicare peaks at one year prior to eligibility and immediately before turning 65.16
Still challenging the status quo

In 1966, Time magazine declared that “the Generation Twenty-Five and Under” (i.e., the Baby Boomers) would be its “Persons of the Year,” stating that “no single earthly figure bestrode the year as did the restless, questing young.” Baby Boomers rewrote the country’s attitudes on race, gender and sex; dictated musical taste; and changed nearly everything about the world they inherited.

It seems only fitting that the Baby Boomers’ last great act will be to upset the apple cart by overwhelming the healthcare industry as they age-in to Medicare en masse.

“What a long, strange trip it’s been.”
— Robert Hunter (Grateful Dead)
“I’m proud of how the Boomers reached for the stars… You only have the moment. You can’t live in the past, and you don’t know what the future is going to bring.”

— Kathleen Casey-Kirschling, the first Baby Boomer, born January 1, 1946