

# Medicare to cover advance care planning for older americans

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(HealthDay)—On Friday, Medicare announced that it will begin reimbursing doctors who work with patients to plan end-of-life care.

Numerous physician and health groups recommended the move. Some doctors already provide [advance care planning](#) to patients without getting paid for their time, and some private insurers cover the practice, the *Associated Press* reported.

The [policy change](#) could make the talks more common for Medicare's 55 million beneficiaries. The counseling would be voluntary, and could take place during a senior's annual physical or during regular office visits, the *AP* said.

"As a physician and a son, I personally know how important these discussions are for patients and families," Patrick Conway, M.D., Medicare's chief medical officer, told the *AP*. "We believe patients and families deserve the opportunity to discuss these issues with their physician and care team."

**More information:** [More Information](#)

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