

Similar declines in frailty over 1 year seen in Medicare Advantage enrollees compared to Traditional Medicare enrollees

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Enrollment in Medicare Advantage (MA) plans is not associated with altered frailty trajectories compared with enrollment in Traditional

Medicare (TM), according to research published in *JAMA Network Open*.

In the article "[Frailty in Medicare Advantage Beneficiaries and Traditional Medicare Beneficiaries](#)," lead author Sandra M. Shi, MD, MPH and colleagues suggest that more work is needed to better understand the health service needs of older adults with [frailty](#).

"A growing proportion of the population is enrolling in Medicare Advantage (MA), which typically offers additional benefits compared with traditional Medicare (TM)," said Shi, a geriatrician and clinician-investigator at Harvard Medical School and the Hinda and Arthur Marcus Institute for Aging Research at Hebrew SeniorLife.

"In this study, we sought to determine whether frailty and frailty trajectories differ between MA enrollees and TM enrollees."

The cohort study of Medicare beneficiaries from 2015 found that MA enrollees experienced similar declines in frailty over one year compared with TM enrollees. The researchers believe that future work should examine whether the specific types of services covered by health insurance can impact frailty and health trajectories for older adults.

This [retrospective cohort study](#) used data from the National Health and Aging Trends Study (2015–2016). Analyses were conducted from August 2023 to March 2024. Participants were community-dwelling Medicare beneficiaries aged 65 years and older.

More information: Frailty in Medicare Advantage Beneficiaries and Traditional Medicare Beneficiaries, *JAMA Network Open* (2024). [DOI: 10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2024.31067](#)

Provided by Hebrew SeniorLife Hinda and Arthur Marcus Institute for Aging Research

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