

**NEW FEDERAL EMPLOYEE HEALTH INSURANCE OPTION  
WILL MEAN SAVINGS FOR SOME, HIGHER COSTS FOR OTHERS**

The Washington Post

Family coverage premiums in the health insurance program for federal employees and retirees will increase by 7 percent on average for 2016 because of the introduction of a new option covering only the enrollee and one family member. Meanwhile, current family plan enrollees who switch to that new option, called self plus one, will save 6 percent on average compared with current rates, the government projects.

Read More @:

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/federal-eye/wp/2015/09/16/new-federal-employee-health-insurance-option-will-mean-savings-for-some-higher-costs-for-others/>

**UPDATE ON EXPECTED INCREASES IN MEDICARE PART B PREMIUMS**

According to the 2015 Medicare Trustees Report, about 30 percent of Medicare Part B beneficiaries are expected to shoulder the full cost of the 2016 premium increase. This will result in an increase of 52 percent, from \$104.90 to \$159.30 per month, for federal retirees covered by the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) and excluded from Social Security coverage.

The remaining 70 percent of Part B beneficiaries are covered by the hold harmless provision of the Social Security law. Under this provision, if there is no cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) and Medicare Part B premiums increase, individuals who have their Medicare premiums deducted directly from their Social Security checks are held harmless from the premium increase. NARFE has an issue brief that provides more details.

NARFE lobbyists have been working with Congress to produce a legislative solution, but no bills have been introduced yet. NARFE is asking members to send a letter to their legislators to alert them to this unfair provision and ask for their support. The letter will be updated when legislation is introduced. Take action now!