Medicare Advantage and Part D Star Ratings at a Glance

CMS Star Ratings 2027: The Numbers That Matter

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) posted the 2027 Medicare Advantage (MA) and Part D Star Ratings on Thursday, October 8, 2026, one week before Open Enrollment began. The rating follows each contract through Monday, December 7, and sets 2028 quality bonus payments.[1]

The Bottom Line

Fewer Contracts Hit Four Stars. More Members Are in the Ones That Did.

229 → 188

Medicare Advantage prescription drug (MA-PD) contracts at four or more stars, 2026 to 2027[1]

4.01 → 3.99

Average overall MA-PD rating, weighted by enrollment[1]

2026 figures are CMS's recalculated values, revised in June and July 2026 after the Clover Health court ruling, and differ from those published last October.[1]

01 Cut Points

Where the Bar Moved[2 4]

Minimum rate to earn four stars on the measure, MA-PD contracts, 2026 to 2027 Star Ratings

Kidney Health Evaluation for Patients with Diabetes	62% → 72%	+10
Follow-Up After Emergency Department Visit for People with Multiple High-Risk Chronic Conditions	67% → 72%	+5
Controlling Blood Pressure	80% → 84%	+4
Diabetes Care – Blood Sugar Controlled	87% → 89%	+2
Medication Adherence for Diabetes Medications	89% → 91%	+2
Plan All-Cause Readmissions (lower is better; maximum rate for four stars)	9% → 10%	eased

Controlling Blood Pressure and Medication Adherence for Diabetes Medications each lost 0.4 average stars as their bars rose.[1]

Cut points reset each year from the distribution of all contracts' scores. A plan that held its Kidney Health Evaluation rate at **70%** earned four stars in 2026 and three in 2027.

02 Methodology

What Changed in the Math[1]

Weight Tripled

Improving or Maintaining Physical Health; Improving or Maintaining Mental Health

Part C weight rose from one to three after a substantive specification change.

New Part D Measures

Concurrent Use of Opioids and Benzodiazepines; Polypharmacy: Use of Multiple Anticholinergic Medications in Older Adults

Process measures, weight of one. First-year MA-PD averages: 3.5 and 3.3.

Appeals Data Checked

Appeals measures

CMS compared Independent Review Entity (IRE) data completeness against Part C reporting data and applied scaled reductions where it found gaps.

03 Looking Ahead

What Is Coming Next

2029 ratings: a new Part C measure.

Depression Screening and Follow-Up starts with the 2027 measurement year, so the work begins now.[1 2]

Final rule: a leaner measure set.

CMS is removing 11 measures focused on administrative processes or showing little difference between plans.[3]

The Inovalon® View

Plan for the Number Before It Lands

Star ratings are decided months before October. Our recommendation: stay proactive, not reactive.

Forecast the bar as well as your rate.

Cut points reset every year, so last year's thresholds will not tell you where you will land.

Follow the weight.

The physical and mental health outcome measures now count three times as much. Put effort where it moves your rating most.

Clean up your appeals data.

CMS now checks it for completeness and can apply scaled reductions when it finds gaps.

See Your Rating's Forecast, Measure by Measure →

Inovalon's Stars Forecast Insights forecasts your overall and measure-level star rating all year, with cut point prediction.

1. "2027 Medicare Advantage and Part D Star Ratings," Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, October 8, 2026, https://www.cms.gov/newsroom/fact-sheets/2027-medicare-advantage-part-d-star-ratings.
2. "2027 Part C & D Star Ratings Technical Notes" (Measure Details, final cut points after guardrails), Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, September 30, 2026, https://www.cms.gov/files/document/2027-tech-notes-2026-09-30.pdf.
3. "Contract Year 2027 Medicare Advantage and Part D Final Rule," Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, April 2, 2026, https://www.cms.gov/newsroom/fact-sheets/contract-year-2027-medicare-advantage-part-d-final-rule.
4. "2026 Part C & D Star Ratings Technical Notes," Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, September 25, 2025, https://www.cms.gov/files/document/2026-star-ratings-technical-notes.pdf.

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