

# Fact Sheet: Largest Medicare Advantage Firms Spend Big to Influence Policy

The largest Medicare Advantage firms spent more than \$330 million lobbying on all issues over the last five years. In 2024, they deployed more than 220 Medicare Advantage lobbyists to Capitol Hill.

In 2024, more than half of all seniors eligible for Medicare were enrolled in private plans largely paid for with Medicare funds.<sup>1</sup> These private plans – known as Medicare Advantage plans – cost taxpayers hundreds of billions of dollars and deliver inferior care compared to traditional Medicare.

Since their inception in 2003, Medicare Advantage plans are estimated to have cost taxpayers more than \$600 billion in overpayments. These overpayments are expected to grow to \$1 trillion over the next decade.<sup>2</sup>

Just seven companies account for 84 percent of all Medicare Advantage enrollment.<sup>3</sup> While lobbying disclosures do not reveal how much is spent on a single issue, disclosures reveal that these seven companies spent more than \$330 million combined lobbying on all issues over the last five years, according to data from OpenSecrets. [Table 1]

**Table 1 – Total Lobbying Spending by Largest Medicare Advantage Firms**

Company	Percentage of Medicare Advantage Enrollees	Lobbying Spending 2020 – 2024
United Healthcare	29%	\$33.6 million
Humana	18%	\$24.1 million
Blue Cross Blue Shield Plans*	14%	\$131.5 million
CVS Health	12%	\$52.9 million
Kaiser	6%	\$20.4 million
Centene	3%	\$25.8 million
Cigna	2%	\$43.6 million
<b>Total</b>	<b>84%</b>	<b>\$332 million</b>

Source: [KFF News](#) and [OpenSecrets.org](#). \*BCBS plans include many affiliates. Lobbying totals include spending by subsidiary companies as well (See BCBS's lobbying subsidiaries, [here](#)).

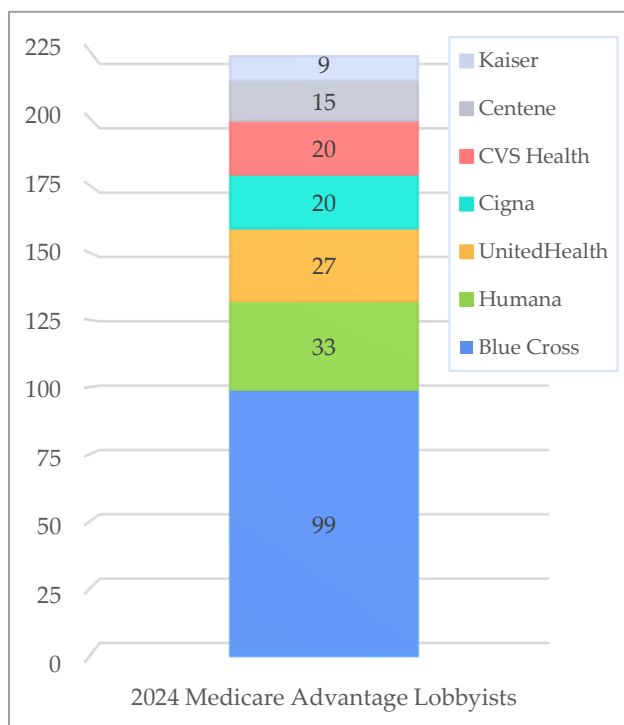
<sup>1</sup> Meredith Freed et. al, *Medicare Advantage in 2024: Enrollment Update and Key Trends*, KFF NEWS (Aug. 8, 2024), <https://citizen.short.gy/VbGEPxcc>.

<sup>2</sup> Robert Weissman, *DOGE Delusions*, PUBLIC CITIZEN (Jan. 15, 2024), <https://citizen.short.gy/BVSsTt>.

<sup>3</sup> Meredith Freed et. al, *Medicare Advantage in 2024: Enrollment Update and Key Trends*, KFF NEWS (Aug. 8, 2024), <https://citizen.short.gy/VbGEPxcc>.

Together, these seven companies deploy hundreds of lobbyists each year to Capitol Hill to influence policy. In 2024 for example, they sent a combined 328 lobbyists to lobby the federal government on all issues.<sup>4</sup> Of these, 223 lobbyists – nearly 70 percent of the total – reported specifically lobbying on “Medicare Advantage,” among other things. [Figure 1]

**Figure 1 – Medicare Advantage Lobbyists in 2024 by Company**



Source: Public Citizen’s analysis of House lobbying data

While these companies offer all types of plans, Medicare Advantage plans appear to be a focus for their lobbyists. At least half of all the lobbyists hired by each company in 2024 lobbied in part on Medicare Advantage.

All lobbyists hired by Humana in 2024 lobbied on Medicare Advantage (among other issues). More than 70 percent of Blue Cross lobbyists were tasked in part with influencing Medicare Advantage policy.

Blue Cross Blue Shield – which includes many subsidiaries<sup>5</sup> – deployed nearly 100 lobbyists that lobbied in part on Medicare Advantage in 2024. Humana sent the second most, 33, followed by UnitedHealth with 27.

Dr. Mehmet Oz, President Trump’s nominee for Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Administrator, has endorsed the expansion of Medicare Advantage and has been one of the programs most vocal supporters.<sup>6</sup> When he ran for Senate in 2022, Oz disclosed hundreds of thousands of dollars in combined investments in two of the insurers highlighted in this analysis – UnitedHealth Group and CVS Health – investments he says he will sell if confirmed.<sup>7</sup> If Oz is confirmed as the CMS Administrator, attacks on traditional Medicare are likely to move into overdrive. We should strengthen Medicare by improving it and expanding access to it, not weakening it through further privatization.

<sup>4</sup> When the same lobbyist is hired by multiple companies, that same lobbyist is counted multiple times in the 328-lobbyist total. Counting each lobbyist once would result in a total of 283.

<sup>5</sup> See subsidiaries here: <https://citizen.short.gy/TGTTrS3>

<sup>6</sup> Eagan Kemp, *The Not So Great Oz*, PUBLIC CITIZEN (Dec. 19, 2024), <https://citizen.short.gy/eFFIKC>.

<sup>7</sup> Noah Tong, *Dr. Oz Vows to Sell Healthcare Stocks Once Confirmed to run CMS*, FIERCE HEALTHCARE (Feb. 19, 2025), <https://citizen.short.gy/vIHjNV>.