



Blue Button 2.0

Background

With the establishment of the initial [Medicare Blue Button](#)® service in 2010, Medicare beneficiaries became able to download their Part A, Part B, and Part D healthcare claims data through MyMedicare.gov in either PDF or text format. While the original Blue Button effort was a first step toward making patient data available for Medicare beneficiaries, CMS has expanded on their initial effort by relaunching the program as Blue Button 2.0.

Standardization is Key

The Office of the National Coordinator for Health IT (ONC) and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) have repeatedly cited the lack of standardized data exchange across health IT systems as a large barrier to interoperability. Where specific standards are not consistently used, including with application programming interfaces (APIs), the exchange is more difficult and expensive than it needs to be, and the recipient of exchanged data must often undertake substantial special effort to make sense of the information. Blue Button 2.0 is a proposed part of the solution to standardize health information.

What is Blue Button 2.0?

Medicare Blue Button 2.0 is a new, modernized version of the original Blue Button service. It enables beneficiaries to access their Medicare Parts A, B, and D claims data and share that electronic health information through an API with applications, services, and research programs they select. According to CMS Administrator Seema Verma, there are now over [1,500 developers with a Blue Button Sandbox Account](#).

Goals and [Uses](#)

Medicare Blue Button 2.0 is expected to foster increased competition among technology innovators who serve Medicare patients and their caregivers, such as through finding better ways to use claims data to address their health needs.

The Medicare Blue Button 2.0 API is also expected to improve the Medicare beneficiary experience by providing beneficiaries secure access to their claims data in a standardized, computable format.

Medicare Blue Button 2.0 will provide beneficiaries with a longitudinal view of their Medicare claims data, which can then be combined with other health information within third party applications.

Medicare Blue Button 2.0 initiatives aim to empower patients by ensuring that they have access to their healthcare data and can decide how their data is going to be used, all while keeping their data safe and secure.

Where to go for more information:

- **CMS Blue Button 2.0 website:** <https://bluebutton.cms.gov/>
- **Technical information, including for developers:** <https://www.cms.gov/Research-Statistics-Data-and-Systems/CMS-Information-Technology/Blue-Button/index.html>
- **Twitter:** Follow CMS on Twitter @CMSSGov and @CMSinnovates
- **For patients:** <https://www.medicare.gov/manage-your-health/medicares-blue-button-blue-button-20>
- **Google Group:** <https://groups.google.com/forum/#!forum/developer-group-for-cms-blue-button-api>