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MEDICARE NEWS

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New Affordable Care Act program to improve care, control Medicare costs, off to a strong start

Over 1.1 million beneficiaries now served by Accountable Care Organizations

A new program that will help physicians, hospitals, and other health care providers work together to improve care for people with Medicare is off to a strong start, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) announced today.

Under the new Medicare Shared Savings Program (Shared Savings Program), 27 Accountable Care Organizations (ACOs) have entered into agreements with CMS, taking responsibility for the quality of care furnished to people with Medicare in return for the opportunity to share in savings realized through improved care. The Shared Savings Program and other initiatives related to Accountable Care Organizations are made possible by the Affordable Care Act, the health care law of 2010. Participation in an ACO is purely voluntary for providers and beneficiaries and people with Medicare retain their current ability to seek treatment from any provider they wish.

The first 27 Shared Savings Program ACOs will serve an estimated 375,000 beneficiaries in 18 States. This brings the total number of organizations participating Medicare shared savings initiatives on April 1 to 65, including the 32 Pioneer Model ACOs that were announced last December, and six Physician Group Practice Transition Demonstration organizations that started in January 2011. In all, as of April 1, more than 1.1 million beneficiaries are receiving care from providers participating in Medicare shared savings initiatives.

“We are encouraged by this strong start and confident that by the end of this year, we will have a robust program in place, benefitting millions of seniors and people with disabilities across the country,” said CMS Acting Administrator Marilyn Tavenner.

Anyone who has multiple doctors may have experienced the frustration of fragmented and disconnected care: lost or unavailable medical charts, trouble scheduling an appointment or

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talking to a doctor, duplicated medical procedures, or having to share the same information over and over with different doctors.

Accountable Care Organizations are designed to lift this burden from patients, while improving care and reducing costs. The Shared Savings Program was created by the Affordable Care Act after a number of efforts in the private sector showed that improving care can lead to lower costs. The selected ACOs include more than 10,000 physicians, 10 hospitals, and 13 smaller physician-driven organizations in both urban and rural areas. Their models for coordinating care and improving quality vary in response to the needs of the beneficiaries in the areas they are serving. CMS is reviewing more than 150 applications from ACOs seeking to enter the program in July.

To ensure that savings are achieved through improving and providing care that is appropriate, safe, and timely, an ACO must meet strict quality standards. For 2012, CMS has established 33 quality measures relating to care coordination and patient safety, appropriate use of preventive health services, improved care for at-risk populations, and the patient and caregiver experience of care.

CMS also announced today that five ACOs are participating in the Advance Payment ACO Model beginning April 1. This model will provide advance payment of expected shared savings to [rural](#) and physician-based ACOs participating in the Shared Savings Program that would benefit from additional start-up resources. These resources will help build the necessary care coordination infrastructure necessary to improve patient outcomes and reduce costs, such as new staff or information technology systems. CMS is reviewing more than 50 applications for Advance Payments that start in July.

To learn more about the ACOs announced today, visit:
http://www.cms.gov/apps/media/fact_sheets.asp

For more information on the Advanced Payment ACO Model, including the participating ACOs, visit: <http://innovations.cms.gov/initiatives/ACO/Advance-Payment/>.

LIST OF ACCOUNTABLE CARE ORGANIZATIONS STARTING APRIL 1, 2012

Accountable Care Organization/Collaborative Health Systems Partnerships

- **Accountable Care Coalition of Caldwell County, LLC**
Lenoir, NC
- **Accountable Care Coalition of Coastal Georgia**
Ormond, FL (Serving beneficiaries in GA and SC)
- **Accountable Care Coalition of Eastern North Carolina, LLC**
New Bern, NC
- **Accountable Care Coalition of Greater Athens Georgia**
Athens, GA
- **Accountable Care Coalition of Mount Kisco, LLC**
Mount Kisco, NY
- **Accountable Care Coalition of the Mississippi Gulf Coast, LLC**
Clearwater, FL (Serving beneficiaries in the Mississippi Gulf Coast area)
- **Accountable Care Coalition of the North Country, LLC**
Canton, NY
- **Accountable Care Coalition of Southeast Wisconsin, LLC**
Milwaukee, WI
- **Accountable Care Coalition of Texas, Inc.**
Houston, TX

AHS ACO, LLC

Morristown, NJ (Serving beneficiaries in NJ and PA)

AppleCare Medical ACO, LLC

Buena Park, CA

Arizona Connected Care, LLC

Tucson, AZ

Chinese Community Accountable Care Organization

New York, NY

CIPA Western New York IPA, doing business as Catholic Medical Partners

Buffalo, NY

Coastal Carolina Quality Care, Inc.
New Bern, NC

Crystal Run Healthcare ACO, LLC
Middletown, NY (Serving beneficiaries in NY and PA)

Florida Physicians Trust, LLC
Winter Park, FL

Hackensack Physician-Hospital Alliance ACO, LLC
Hackensack, NJ (Serving beneficiaries in NJ and NY)

Jackson Purchase Medical Associates, PSC
Paducah, KY

Jordan Community ACO
Plymouth, MA

North Country ACO
Littleton, NH (Serving beneficiaries in NH and VT)

Optimus Healthcare Partners, LLC
Summit, NJ

Physicians of Cape Cod ACO Description of Organization
Hyannis, MA

Premier ACO Physician Network
Lakewood, CA

Primary Partners, LLC
Clermont, FL

RGV ACO Health Providers, LLC
Donna, TX

West Florida ACO, LLC
Trinity, FL