

# Medicare Shared Savings Program Accountable Care Organizations

Our practice is participating in Steward National Care Network, Inc., an Accountable Care Organization (ACO). An ACO is a group of doctors, hospitals, and/or other health care providers that work together to improve the quality and experience of care you receive. ACOs receive a portion of any savings that result from reducing costs and meeting quality requirements.

- ▶ Medicare evaluates how well each ACO meets these goals every year. Those ACOs that do a good job can earn a financial bonus. ACOs that earn a bonus may use the payment to invest more in your care or share a portion directly with your providers. ACOs may owe a penalty if their care increases costs.
- ▶ Our practice's participation in Steward National Care Network, Inc. doesn't limit your choice of health care providers. Your Medicare benefits are not changing. You still have the right to visit any doctor, hospital, or other provider that accepts Medicare at any time, just like you do now.
- ▶ To help us coordinate your health care better, Medicare shares information about your care with your providers. If you don't want Medicare to share your health care information, call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227).



## How do ACOs work?

- ▶ An ACO **isn't** a Medicare Advantage plan which is an "all in one" alternative to Original Medicare, offered by private companies approved by Medicare. An ACO **isn't** an HMO plan, or an insurance plan of any kind. Important!
- ▶ ACOs have agreements with Medicare to be financially accountable for the quality, cost, and experience of care you receive.
- ▶ Coordinated care can avoid wasted time and costs for repeated tests and unneeded appointments. It may make it easier to spot potential problems before they become more serious – like drug interactions that can happen if one doctor isn't aware of what another has prescribed.
- ▶ ACOs may use electronic health records, case managers, and electronic prescriptions to help you stay healthy. Some ACOs have special programs to encourage you to have a primary care visit or use their care management team. Participation in these programs is optional.
- ▶ Our ACO is approved to send our patients for skilled nursing facility (SNF) or rehabilitation care even if they haven't stayed in a hospital for 3 days first, which is usually a requirement in Medicare. For you to qualify for this benefit, we'd have to decide that you need SNF care and meet certain other eligibility requirements. Our practice is glad to talk with you about this benefit and how it could work for you if you need skilled nursing and/or rehabilitation care. If you'd like to know more, ask our practice at your next visit.



## What information will be shared about me?

- ▶ Medicare shares information about your care with your health care providers; like dates and times you visited a health care provider, your medical conditions, and a list of past and current prescriptions. This information helps Steward National Care Network, Inc. track the care and tests that you've already had.
- ▶ Sharing your data helps make sure all the providers involved in your care have access to your health information when and where they need it.



- ▶ **We value your privacy.** ACOs must put important safeguards in place to make sure all your health care information is safe. We respect your choice on how your health care information is used for care coordination and quality improvement. If you want Medicare to share your health care information with Steward National Care Network, Inc. or other ACOs in which your health care providers participate, there's nothing more you need to do.
- ▶ If you **don't** want Medicare to share your health care information, **call 1-800-MEDICARE** (1-800-633-4227). Tell the representative that your health care provider is part of an ACO and you don't want Medicare to share your health care information. TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.
- ▶ If you change your mind and want to let Medicare share your health information again, call 1-800-MEDICARE to let Medicare know. We aren't allowed to tell Medicare for you.
- ▶ Even if you decline to share your health care information, Medicare will still use your information for some purposes, like assessing the financial and quality of care performance of the health care providers participating in ACOs. Also, Medicare may share some of your health care information with ACOs when measuring the quality of care given by health care providers participating in those ACOs.

## How can I make the most of getting care from an ACO?

- ▶ Ask your clinician if they have a secure online portal that gives you 24-hour access to your personal health information, including lab results and provider recommendations. This will help you make informed decisions about your health care, track your treatment, and monitor your health outcomes.
- ▶ As a Medicare beneficiary, you can choose or change your primary clinician or "main doctor" at any time. Your primary clinician is the health care provider that you believe is

responsible for coordinating your overall care. If you choose a primary clinician, that clinician may have more tools or services to help with your care. You can learn more in the [Voluntary Alignment Beneficiary Fact Sheet](#).

For step-by-step instructions on how to select or change your "main doctor," refer to the Choosing a Primary Clinician video ([https://youtu.be/HgRe4VCH2\\_I](https://youtu.be/HgRe4VCH2_I)).



## What if I have concerns about being part of an ACO?

- ▶ If you have concerns about the quality of care or other services you receive from your ACO or provider, you can contact your Medicare Beneficiary Ombudsman who can assist you with Medicare-related questions, concerns, and challenges. The Medicare Beneficiary Ombudsman works closely with the Medicare program, including Medicare.gov, 1-800-MEDICARE, and State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIPs), to help make sure information and assistance are available for you. Visit Medicare.gov for information on how the [Medicare Beneficiary Ombudsman](#) can help you.
- ▶ If you suspect Medicare fraud or abuse from your ACO or any Medicare provider, we encourage you to make a report by contacting the HHS Office of Inspector General (1-800-HHS-TIPS) or your local [Senior Medicare Patrol \(SMP\)](#).



**MyMedicare.gov** is a free and secure online service that lets you access personalized information about your Medicare benefits and services.

## What's MyMedicare.gov?

MyMedicare.gov gives you access to your health information at any time.

- ▶ Create a list of your favorite health care professionals and choose a primary clinician.
- ▶ Find your eligibility, entitlement, and preventive service information.
- ▶ Check your health and prescription drug enrollment information.

## Things to Know When Choosing a Primary Clinician

- ✓ You can choose any health care professional as your primary clinician, regardless of specialty—for example, you can choose your primary care doctor, or your allergist, immunologist, nurse practitioner, physician assistant, and so on.
- ✓ You can still choose to go to any health care professional who accepts Medicare.
- ✓ You can choose another health care professional to act as your primary clinician at any time. Your choice of a primary clinician will remain the same unless you make a change at MyMedicare.gov.

# Register for MyMedicare.gov and Choose Your Primary Clinician

Need help choosing your primary clinician on MyMedicare.gov? Call 1-800-MEDICARE (TTY users can call 1-877-486-2048) or visit the MyMedicare.gov Help page. If you don't have internet access, we encourage you to work with family or friends, or check in with your local State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) office, library, place of worship, or community center for help.

## Why Choose a Primary Clinician on MyMedicare.gov?

Your primary clinician is the health care professional—a doctor, physician assistant, nurse practitioner, or certified nurse specialist—you believe is responsible for coordinating your overall care, regardless of where you choose to get services.

By choosing a primary clinician on MyMedicare.gov, you give them access to tools or services that are available only to patients of health care professionals participating in an Accountable Care Organization (ACO) or other Medicare alternative payment models. (ACOs are groups of doctors, hospitals, and other health care professionals, working together to give you high quality, coordinated service and health care.)

Your primary clinician may be best able to help you make health care decisions, which can improve how you manage your health care and lead to better results.

## How to Choose Your Primary Clinician

- 1 Go to **MyMedicare.gov** and log into your account.
- 2 At the top of the home page, select the **My Health** tab and select **Providers** from the drop-down menu.
- 3 Select **Physicians & Other Clinicians**, and then select the box **Add a Clinician or Group Practice**. Make sure your internet browser allows pop-ups, if this message shows up at the bottom of your screen.
- 4 Under the main header **Find Medicare physicians and other clinicians**, type your primary clinician's ZIP code and last name. Select the clinician from the drop-down menu. Click **Search**.
- 5 You'll find details about the clinician you chose. Select **Add to Favorites** in the top right corner of the screen.
- 6 On the next page, select the correct address for your clinician. At the bottom of the screen, under the header **Add as Your Primary Clinician**, check the box labeled **Make this my primary clinician**. Click **Add to Favorites**.
- 7 You'll then be taken to the general information page, with a green pop-up box that says your clinician has been added to your favorites list.
- 8 Click on MyMedicare.gov at the top of your browser to go back to MyMedicare.gov, and then click the box **Update Provider Data**. Your favorites should now be updated with your primary clinician.