

## NOTICE TO PATIENTS:

### **Your Doctor is Participating in a Medicare Shared Savings Program Accountable Care Organization**

<BENEFICIARY FULL NAME>

<ADDRESS>

<CITY STATE ZIP>

<file creation date>

#### **Purpose of Letter**

The purpose of this letter is to provide you with information about the Medicare initiative that your doctor is participating in, and to give you the opportunity to let your doctor know how you feel about sharing your medical information.

#### **ACOs: A Way to Better Coordinate Your Health Care**

Your doctor or primary care provider is participating in **[ACO Name]**, our Medicare Shared Savings Program **Accountable Care Organization (ACO)**. An ACO is a group of doctors, hospitals, and health care providers working together with Medicare to give you high quality, more coordinated service and care.

#### **We're Working to Improve Your Care**

By helping your doctors and primary care providers to communicate more closely with your other health care providers, ACOs can deliver high-quality, more coordinated care that meets your individual needs and preferences. ACOs may share in the savings it achieves for the Medicare program when it succeeds in delivering high-quality care and spending health care dollars more wisely.

#### **You Can Still Choose Any Doctor or Hospital**

**Your Medicare benefits aren't changing.** ACOs are **not** a Medicare Advantage plan, an HMO plan, or an insurance plan of any kind. You still have the right to use any doctor or hospital that accepts Medicare, at any time. Your doctor may recommend that you see particular doctors or providers, but it's always your choice about what doctors you use or hospitals you visit.

## **Having Your Medical Information Gives Us a More Complete Picture of Your Health**

To help us give you the right care, in the right place, at the right time, Medicare plans to start sharing information with us about your care, starting as early as mid-January, 2014. This information will include things like dates and times you visited a doctor or hospital, your medical conditions, and a list of past and current prescriptions.

This information about care you've gotten from other healthcare providers will give the doctors and healthcare providers in our ACO a more complete and up-to-date picture of your health. This information helps your doctors and healthcare providers participating in our ACO to get you the high quality care you need when you need it, and will be shared only with people involved in giving you care.

If you choose to let Medicare share your personal health information with us, your information may also be shared with other ACOs in which any of your doctors or other healthcare providers participate. If you don't want your information shared with these other ACOs, follow the instructions below to decline sharing personal health information.

## **You Can Ask Medicare Not To Share Your Medical Information with Us for Care Coordination and Quality Improvement**

Your privacy is very important to us, so we respect your choice on the use of your personal information for care coordination and quality improvement. Just like Medicare, ACOs are required to put important safeguards in place to make sure all your medical information is safe.

**Yes, share my information:** If you want Medicare to share information about care you have received with us and with other ACOs in which any of your doctors or other healthcare providers participates, then **there's nothing more you need to do.**

**No, please don't share my information:** If you choose, you can ask Medicare not to share information with us or with any other ACOs for care coordination and quality improvement purposes by doing **one** of the following:

- Call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). Be sure to tell the representative you are calling about ACOs. TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.
- Complete and Sign the "Declining to Share Personal Health Information" form in **[our] [your doctor's]** office.
- Complete, sign, and return the "Declining to Share Personal Health Information" form included with this letter.

If you choose not to share your personal medical information for care coordination and quality improvement purposes, we need to get your decision by **[date]** or Medicare will start sharing this information with us and with any other ACOs in which any of your doctors or other healthcare providers participate. However, you may choose to stop this

information-sharing at any time in the future by calling 1-800-MEDICARE and telling the representative you are calling about ACOs.

Even if you choose to inform Medicare of your preferences around sharing information with ACOs today, you can always change your mind in the future. To find out how, just call 1-800 MEDICARE and tell the representative you have a question about ACOs, or ask your doctor or healthcare provider working with an ACO.

### **Medicare May Share Some Information to Measure Your Quality of Care**

Even if you don't want Medicare to share your personal information with us or with other ACOs for coordinating and improving the quality of your care, Medicare will still use your information for some purposes, including certain financial calculations and determining the quality of care given by your healthcare providers participating in ACOs. Also, Medicare may share some of your personal health information with ACOs when measuring the quality of care given by healthcare providers at ACOs.

### **Questions?**

If you have questions or concerns, you can call us at [phone number], make an appointment to see your doctor or primary care provider, or bring it up next time you're in your doctor's office. You also can call 1-800-MEDICARE and tell the representative you're calling about ACOs, or visit [www.medicare.gov/acos.html](http://www.medicare.gov/acos.html).