



In this Issue:

Experian

- PHE to End; Telehealth Extensions
- Quality Measures Spotlight – Colorectal Screening
- Preferred Providers – Surgery
- Security - BEWARE
- 2024 – Around the corner
- Reminders
- Practice Meetings

#VegasStrong



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SILVER STATE ACO FOUNDING BOARD MEMBER PASSES

Sadly, Silver State ACO announces the passing of one of the founding members of our Governing Board.

Dost Wattoo, founder of Heart Center of Nevada, passed away peacefully at home on Wednesday, April 26th. Dr. Wattoo's experience, knowledge and insight were a great contribution to Silver State ACO.

Our condolences to his family. His presence will be missed by his colleagues at Heart Center of Nevada and by the entire healthcare community in Las Vegas.



Dost Wattoo, MD.

THE DAY HAS COME – END OF THE COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY – MAY 11, 2023

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) continues to publish updates and to respond to questions from the healthcare community regarding various waivers and flexibilities that were implemented during the Public Health Emergency (PHE).

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May 3, 2023

Northern Nevada:
May 4,, 2023

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The focus of CMS is to ensure patient health and safety. As such, certain regulations and changes implemented during the PHE are being extended as the value of those changes has become apparent.

Among those regulations that are being extended are certain provisions to providing care via telehealth. Through December 31, 2023, CMS has extended the following:



- Telehealth may be made available in any geographic area – not just rural regions
- Telehealth may be provided from home, not just a facility
- Telehealth may be provided via telephone if the patient does not have access to a smartphone or video

Among changes that will *not* be extended beyond May 11th, the day the PHE is set to end, is the Blanket SNF 3-day Rule Waiver. Some CMS representatives have agreed that this should be extended. However, the requirement (“3-day Rule”) was written into the statute and, therefore, cannot be overridden outside the Public Health Emergency.

It should be noted that even though the *blanket* waiver is not being extended, Silver State ACO’s 3-day Rule Waiver is still in place. This means that CMS *will pay* for an ACO attributed patient to be in a skilled nursing facility (SNF), if indicated, without the need to have first been in the hospital for a minimum of three days (though following ACO protocols and receiving ACO approval is required). Should you have a patient who you want to refer to a skilled nursing facility, and who falls within this category, please reach out to Silver State ACO for assistance in placing the patient so that he/she gets the best and most appropriate care.



CMS is strongly recommending that all practices refer to the provider specific guidelines regarding the end of the PHE, found at the following location on their website: <https://www.cms.gov/coronavirus-waivers>. It’s definitely worth a few minutes to learn what the future holds.

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QUALITY MEASURES SPOTLIGHT –
PREVENTIVE CARE: COLORECTAL
CANCER SCREENING

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) requires the ACO to report several Quality Measures on behalf of its participant practices. This month we are focusing on the “*Colorectal Cancer Screening*” measure.



SPOTLIGHT

CMS requires patients age 45-75 years of age to have an appropriate screening for colorectal cancer. Patients with a diagnosis or documented history of colorectal cancer or a total colectomy will be excluded from this measure.

Appropriate screenings are:

- Fecal Occult Blood Test (FOBT) during 2023
- Flexible Sigmoidoscopy or CT Colonography during 2023 or the four years prior
- Colonoscopy during 2023 or nine years prior
- Fecal Immunochemical DNA Test (FIT-DNA) during 2023 or two years prior

This measure may be documented during a telehealth encounter.

Regardless of whether the documentation is made during an in office visit or a telehealth encounter the documentation in the medical record must include the following:

1. Type of test
2. Date test was performed (Year is required)
3. Results or findings. (“Normal” and “Abnormal” are acceptable results)

Below are some examples of documentation that Medicare will accept. As you will see, these include all of the elements listed above:

- Colonoscopy 2018 Abnormal
- FOBT 2023 Normal

Below are examples of documentation Medicare will not accept because they do not contain all 3 of the required elements:

- Normal Cologuard (Missing year completed)
- Colonoscopy 2019 (Missing result/finding)

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Please reach out to your Quality Coordinator if you have any questions or need help meeting this measure.

PREFERRED PROVIDERS - SURGERY

As explained in last month's newsletter, Preferred Providers are *not* part of the ACO. They are carefully vetted specialists with whom Silver State ACO has contracted. These providers have proven their value based on outcomes as well as cost. Both of these factors are reviewed and considered using actual claims data received from CMS.

In Southern Nevada, Silver State ACO's Preferred Provider for general surgery is Valley Health Physician Alliance Surgical Specialists. This group of outstanding surgeons is committed to providing quality care and to educating the next generation of surgeons. Their residency program benefits the community by expanding the number of physicians and the quality of surgical care. The program benefits practices and patients directly by having the availability for patients to be seen quickly, often the same or next day.

Because of the group's focus on education, the result is longer clinic appointments, affording patients the ability to ask questions and to learn more about their disease process. In the hospital, patients are seen multiple times a day and there is a surgery resident physician in the facility 24/7.

Valley Health Physician Alliance Surgical Specialists has offices at Spring Valley Hospital and in Henderson. They perform surgeries at all Valley Health System facilities in Southern Nevada (Centennial Hills, Henderson, Spring Valley, Summerlin and Valley Hospitals).

Please remember to refer patients who need surgery, or a surgical consult, to Valley Health Physician Alliance Surgical Specialists. They can be reached at 702-382-8222.

Attached to this newsletter is additional information about the group, including details about each of the physicians.

BEWARE!

There are always new and different ways that 'bad actors' are trying to insinuate themselves into your data as well as into your confidence. BEWARE!



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If you don't recognize the address from which you receive an email, don't open it. Ask a coworker or supervisor whether it is an address that they recognize. Perhaps they referred someone to you.

And, if you do recognize the sender's email address, but something you can see in the preview of the email seems suspect, STOP. Don't open the email, don't reply to it. Look very carefully again. Is the email address correct? Does it, perhaps, have an extra "i" that didn't stand out when you first looked at it? Report suspicious emails to your IT department.

Patient data is very valuable to the wallets of phishers and scammers. But it is far more valuable to the real owner, the patient, in terms of emotional stress as well as time and money to "clean up" issues caused.

Tread carefully. Remember – better safe than sorry!



2024 – AROUND THE CORNER



Please call or email the Silver State ACO office with any recommendations of practices who you think would benefit from joining us and who would, of course, be an asset to SSACO. You will be entered into a raffle to win a prize at the next practice meeting. There will be no additional work on your part. We will research the practice to be sure that it aligns with the SSACO mission and standards.

REMINDERS:

Experian Notifications

As a benefit of participating in Silver State ACO, every practice has access to the Experian MemberMatch system. This system will notify the practice when any of its attributed patients is discharged from a hospital with which Experian contracts. (In Nevada, this includes all UHS facilities; Carson Tahoe Medical Center in Northern Nevada; UMC, MountainView, Sunrise, and Southern Hills Hospitals in Southern Nevada; and Desert View Hospital in Pahrump.) This gives the practice the ability to reach out to the patient and make an appointment for him/her to come in to the clinic to be seen by the doctor.

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A post-acute visit can be coded as a Transitional Care Management (TCM) visit which pays substantially more than a regular Medicare visit for the same amount of time. The basic requirements for billing a TCM visit are:



- Contact the patient within two business days of discharge
- Bring the patient in for a face-to-face visit with a provider within 7 or 14 days. (There are separate codes for 7 or 14 days and mid to high complexity cases)
- Do a medicine reconciliation
- Provide certain non-face-to-face services, as needed

A TCM visit is excellent for the patient (he/she sees a PCP soon after discharge from the hospital. This has been proven to drastically reduce the likelihood of the patient being readmitted to the hospital). The practice benefits (higher reimbursement for the same amount of time). And, the ACO benefits by helping reduce CMS overall costs by reducing readmissions.

Additional details about Transitional Care Management visits is attached to this newsletter's email.

The biggest obstacle for providers is contacting the patient within two business days because the practice didn't know that the patient was in the hospital. So, how could it know that the patient was discharged? The Experian system was developed for this very reason.

At *no cost* to the practice, Silver State ACO Participants may request



that one or more staff members have access to the system. One staff member will get real time email notifications when the patient is discharged. It is an easy to use portal and contains additional information (including the phone

number provided to the hospital - which may be more up to date than the one in the practice's system.)

Silver State ACO urges its participants to make use of the Experian notification system. If you would like staff to be educated (or reeducated) in its use, please do not hesitate to request help. For any questions, or to request training or additional log-ins, please talk to your Quality Coordinator or contact Rena Kantor, Director of Operations, directly (rena@silverstateaco.com or 702-751-0945).

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POSTERS and BENEFICIARY NOTICES



All practices should now have an updated poster, with specified CMS verbiage which was updated for 2023, displayed in the office. In addition, practices must deliver beneficiary notices, also with new 2023 verbiage, to all newly assigned beneficiaries. The beneficiary notice may be delivered in person, by mail or email.

CARE COORDINATION

DispatchHealth is a Silver State ACO preferred provider for *in-home care*. DispatchHealth delivers quality care in the comfort of a patient’s home, and is available in the evenings and over the weekend when the practice may be closed. DispatchHealth is *not* a clinic, so cannot become a patient’s new provider. In fact, after each visit, DH will provide a detailed report to the practice to which the patient is attributed.



DispatchHealth has a dedicated line for Silver State ACO attributed beneficiaries: **725-246-1973**

SILVER STATE ACO DOES GOOD

Silver State ACO is proud to have made a donation to the Firefighters Memorial in Carson City.



Karla Perez, Regional Vice President of Universal Health Systems, and a member of the Silver State ACO Governing Board, represented SSACO at the memorial.

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PRACTICE MEETINGS

The meetings on May 3rd and 4th are the last ones before the summer. Please join us. Have lunch (in southern Nevada) or dinner (in Northern Nevada), listen, learn, meet and greet, and perhaps even win a prize.

Practice Meeting Schedule for 2023:

Please note your calendar and watch for emails re: changes to schedule or venue

SOUTHERN NEVADA

Meetings are scheduled to be held at 11:30 a.m.

Wednesday, May 3, 2023 – Summerlin Hospital

Wednesday, August 2, 2023 – Summerlin Hospital (*Note venue change)

Wednesday, November 1, 2023 – Summerlin Hospital

NORTHERN NEVADA

Note: Meet and Greet is at 5 pm, Meeting starts at 5:30

Thursday, May 4, 2023 - 5:00 pm NMMC Sparks Medical Building – Ste 201

Thursday, August 17, 2023 – 5:00 pm NMMC Sparks Medical Building – Ste 201

(Please note date change)

Thursday, November 2, 2023 - 5:00 pm NMMC Sparks Medical Building – Ste 201

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The saying, "April showers bring May flowers" can be traced back nearly 450 years to English poet Thomas Tusser (1524 – 1580). It is a reminder that even the most unpleasant of things, in this case the heavy rains of April, can bring about very enjoyable things indeed -- even an abundance of flowers in May. It is also a lesson in patience, and one that remains valid to this day. Wow, the phrase was coined almost 450 years ago. It seems that some things have not changed all that much!

And May brings SSACO practice meetings... where we will present a lot of very useful information, as well as prizes. To be entered to win one of the prizes, reply to the email to which this newsletter was attached with the words, "I read it to the end" in the subject line.

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