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TRANSITIONAL CARE MANAGEMENT

Over the years, it has been proven that patients who see their doctor soon after being discharged from a hospital are far less likely to be readmitted to the hospital. Silver State ACO (“SSACO”) has, independently, confirmed this. In 2019, only 7.5% of SSACO beneficiaries who saw their healthcare provider within 30 days of discharge, were readmitted. In comparison, over 16.5% of patients who had *not* been to their doctor within that same time frame were readmitted. The graph, on the next page, shows actual results for Silver State ACO readmissions for 2019.



The Valley  Health System™

Centennial Hills Hospital • Desert Springs Hospital • Henderson Hospital (2016)
Spring Valley Hospital • Summerlin Hospital • Valley Hospital

The value of post-acute visits has been recognized by CMS (Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services). A number of years ago, CMS initiated the Transitional Care Management (“TCM”) visit in order to incentivize practices to bring their patients in for a follow-up after discharge. The billing codes allow the practice to be paid *substantially* more than for a regular visit. The requirements are straightforward:

- Contact the patient within two business days after discharge from an acute facility
- Furnish certain non-face-to-face services, as needed, such as providing education to the beneficiary or caregiver or establishing referrals for community assistance
- Face to face visit with the patient in the clinic within 7 or 14 days. CPT Code 99495 is used for cases of at least moderate complexity within 14 calendar days after discharge; CPT

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Code 99496 is used for cases of high complexity within 7 days of discharge

- Do a medicine reconciliation at the in-person appointment

CMS has specified that these services *may* be furnished via telehealth. Attached to this newsletter is a fact sheet from the CMS Medicare Learning Network, with additional details. Note that the TCM visit can be billed after a patient is discharged from an inpatient setting, including a Skilled Nursing Facility (“SNF”), Inpatient Psychiatric or Rehab facility or even from Observation status at an acute care hospital. However, also note that only one facility may bill the TCM code, so be sure to ascertain whether it was already done and billed, if the patient was discharged, for example, from a skilled nursing facility.



CMS views these visits as an important step toward reducing readmissions. And, reducing readmissions is much better for the patient as well as a means toward reducing overall costs.

CMS considers the readmission rate when calculating whether an ACO will receive any earned Shared Savings. This is part of the quality score. As CMS continues to change and amend the calculation of Shared Savings, the readmission rate has actually become a more important component.

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Southern Nevada:

Wednesday, May 5, 2021

Northern Nevada:

Thursday, May 6, 2021

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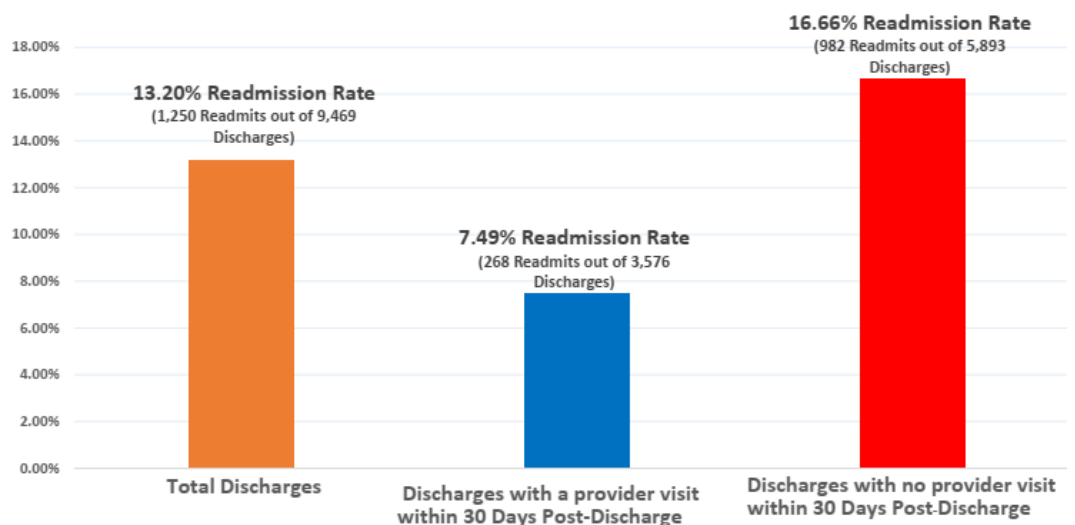
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2019 Readmission Analysis



This graph reflects readmissions within 30 days of discharge, proving the importance of a patient seeing his/her doctor after leaving an acute facility. This highlights the value of bringing in

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the patient - even if it's past the 7 or 14 days that would allow for billing a TCM code. Every readmission that can be avoided helps reduce overall costs and increases the likelihood of SSACO earning shared savings which, in turn, gets distributed to the practices. In other words, do your best to have the patient be seen as soon as possible post-discharge, but don't discount the value of seeing the patient even if two or three weeks after he/she has been discharged.

EXPERIAN NOTIFICATION SYSTEM

Providing the services and billing the appropriate CPT code for a Transitional Care Management visit seems like a "no brainer". Better for the patient, higher reimbursement for the practice, lower costs for the ACO. So, why doesn't everyone automatically do this? One reason is quite obvious – the practice doesn't know that its patient was in the hospital. Perhaps a spouse or child will call two or three weeks after the patient gets home. Or, perhaps the patient might mention it at his/her next visit. By then, however, it's certainly too late to bill the TCM code and, unfortunately, it might be too late to avoid the readmission!



Silver State ACO has addressed this challenge by working with Experian (yes, the giant data company) to identify and notify a patient's PCP when he/she is admitted and, subsequently, discharged from the hospital.

All Silver State ACO Participants have access to this system, at no cost, and should be receiving notifications. New practices that joined us for 2021 may not yet have received any notifications. Please be sure to reach out to your quality coordinator or to the SSACO office if you haven't been briefed on the Experian system, if you have any questions, or would like to request access for additional staff.



Unfortunately, the system is limited to admissions and discharges to/from facilities that are contracted with Experian. All UHS facilities in Nevada (Centennial Hills, Desert Springs, Henderson, Spring Valley, Summerlin, Valley and Northern Nevada Hospitals) contract with

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Experian, as do UMC and the HCA facilities in Southern Nevada. At present, the only facility in Northern Nevada that is contracted with Experian is Northern Nevada Medical Center, resulting in fewer notifications to our Participants in that part of the state. We are working with Experian and other facilities in Northern Nevada to try to implement this system.

PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY EXTENDED

On January 21st, CMS extended the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency for an additional ninety days. The HHS Office of Civil Rights recently issued a “Notification of Enforcement Discretion”. This allows providers to use popular video and text based communication systems to engage in telehealth services without risk of penalties for violations of HIPAA. However, no “public-facing” applications which are accessible by others may be used and *“good faith” efforts must always be made to protect privacy and Protected Health Information (PHI).*



We cannot overstate the need for secure communications and continued education of staff regarding safeguarding of information and protecting data. Unfortunately, the “bad actors” of the internet are working even harder to insinuate themselves into your data systems during the pandemic.

P3 WEBINAR re: E&M Coding

During the week of January 11th, P3, a Silver State ACO Participant since 2019, presented a webinar about changes to E/M (Evaluation and Management) codes for 2021. There are numerous changes, including the redefinition of time for use with certain codes, as well as codes which are no longer valid and new add-on codes. P3 was kind enough to invite all Silver State ACO Participant staff. What an informative and well organized presentation it was! We’ve gotten great feedback from numerous attendees.

Additional information from P3 is attached to this newsletter. What a wonderful example of teamwork and of us helping one another! THANK YOU to P3!



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Upcoming Webinars

P3 is continuing its series of educational webinars and has released details about the subjects to be covered in February and March. *Free* registration is open to all Silver State ACO Participants. Be sure to preregister for these informative webinars on important topics.

P3Health Partners EDUCATIONAL WEBINARS

PLEASE JOIN US

Clinical Topics for Medicare Risk Adjustment

This **FREE WEBINAR SESSION** will **HELP YOU AND YOUR PRACTICE** identify and appropriately document clinical conditions to meet CMS and commercial health plans' requirements.



Presenters:

Ambika Kanta, MSHCA

Director of Quality Delegation, Medical Management

FEBRUARY 17

Topics:

- Closing HEDIS / Quality Care Gaps
- CAHPS / HOS

Times (Pacific):

- 6:30 AM
- 7:30 AM
- 11:30 AM
- 12:30 PM

Please **RSVP TODAY** using the link below:

CLICK HERE

If you have any questions, please email compclinicals@P3HP.org

February Topics: Closing HEDIS / Quality Care Gaps
Registration Link:

<https://survey.alchemer.com/s3/6151328/February-Educational-Webinar>

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EDUCATIONAL WEBINARS

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Clinical Topics for Medicare Risk Adjustment

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Presenters:
David Kahan, MD, MMM, CPC
Vice President Medical Affairs, P3 Health Partners
Mona Bambha, MD, CPC
Medical Director, Comprehensive Clinicals, P3 Health Partners

MARCH 17

Topics: *Vascular Conditions*

- Peripheral Vascular Disease
- Aortic Disease
- Coronary Artery Disease
- Venous Thrombosis

Times (Pacific):

- 7:30 AM
- 12:30 PM

Please **RSVP TODAY** using the link below:

CLICK HERE

If you have any questions, please email compclinicals@P3HP.org

March Topics: Vascular Conditions

Registration Link:

<https://survey.alchemer.com/s3/6151363/March-Educational-Webinar>

Be sure to reserve your spot by registering for either or both of these webinars.

Use the registration links, provided under the descriptive flyer, rather than the "click here" button.

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DELIVERING the BENEFICIARY NOTIFICATION

In last month's newsletter we reminded you about the new, updated verbiage CMS has provided for the written notification that a practice is required to provide to every beneficiary at his/her first primary care visit of the year. For your convenience, we've attached a copy to this newsletter email.



Because of the change in how many clinics are "seeing" their patients (for example, via telehealth) due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we asked CMS for clarification as to whether the notification must be delivered in person. They have confirmed that ACO participants are *encouraged* to distribute the Notice to Beneficiaries in person at the point of care so that they can address any questions or concerns. However, they *are* permitted to distribute the beneficiary notification through electronic transmission or by mail.

We'd like to remind you that CMS requires that you maintain evidence or a record of distributing the notification to beneficiaries, though they have not specified any particular mode or system which must be used.

QUALITY MEASURES 2021 SPOTLIGHT

Preventive Care: Influenza Immunization

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) requires the ACO to report several Quality Measures on behalf of our participant practices. This month we are focusing on the Influenza Immunization measure.



CMS requires patients to receive an influenza immunization between August and March each flu season. As we are currently between the dates of the 2021 Performance Year, we would like to remind practices to document accurately in order to improve performance scores. The dates associated with the flu season are: August 1, 2020 through March 31, 2021.

SPOTLIGHT

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If your practice did not give the vaccination, you do still need to

document in the patient chart if the patient reported receiving a flu shot from another provider between August and March. Patient reported documentation of a flu shot **must** include both the month and year the immunization was administered and can be notated during a telehealth visit.

CMS will make exceptions for this measure, but these **must** be documented in a dated encounter during the influenza season (August 1 through March 31) **every year**. The most common exceptions are:

- Patient allergy
- Patient had a prior adverse reaction
- Other medical reason that the patient cannot receive the immunization
- Patient refuses the immunization

If you have any questions about exceptions for the measure or if you are having trouble meeting this measure, please reach out to your Quality Coordinator.

REMINDER FROM CMS

Finally! Vaccines are becoming more widely available but it's very important to keep taking steps to slow the spread of COVID-19

- Limit gatherings with others
- Maintain social distancing
- Wash your hands thoroughly and frequently
- Wear a mask (or two!) in public



Don't forget your influenza vaccine. It's not too late and it is at least as important this year as any other.

SECURITY REMINDER



Specialists in the field estimate that as many as 88% of data breaches are initiated by human error. Yet, only 43% of employees acknowledge having made a mistake that might compromise a company's data or digital security. The

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breaches are costing companies millions of dollars and the damage continues to grow.

Companies continue to develop sophisticated strategies for their data systems. Yet, the evidence continues to point to staff education and engagement as the best way to stop breaches and viruses from entering the systems in the first place. This means that *all staff* must be engaged. In medical practices that includes everyone from front desk to MAs and administrative staff to physicians and other providers.

Recent evidence shows that constant training is key. And changing the training and how it's delivered is equally important, as studies show that few people remember the message, and even fewer change their habits, if the training is dull or repetitive. Capture your staff's attention. Those who found a presentation very interesting were 13 times more likely to change how they viewed cyber threats. Be creative. It works. And the threat is very real so it's certainly worth trying!



2021 Practice Meeting Dates



Mark your calendars. Be sure to join us at our quarterly practice meetings. Unfortunately, virtual meetings don't give everyone a chance to meet other Participants, but it certainly gives everyone an opportunity to learn about the ACO and CMS requirements, pick up good information about coding and what works for other practices (and, of course, the opportunity to win prizes).

Southern Nevada:

Currently scheduled: Two sessions (7:30 and 11:30 a.m.) each of the following dates:
Wednesday, May 5th at Summerlin Hospital
Wednesday, September 29th at Desert Springs Hospital
Wednesday, November 3rd at Summerlin Hospital

Northern Nevada:

Currently scheduled: at 5 p.m. at Sparks Medical Building each of the following dates:
Thursdays, May 6th, September 30th, November 4th

Be sure to check future newsletters for any updates regarding changes due to COVID-19 or any other reasons.

Happy Valentine's Day

Respond to the email to which this newsletter was attached, with the words "Share the Love" in the subject line, to be entered to win a prize at the next practice meeting.



Honoring Our Heroes

The Cosmopolitan is accepting nominations for Las Vegas Heroes. Winners will be wined and dined (and housed!) in elegant Cosmopolitan style. We're sure that, being part of the healthcare workforce, you know of many unsung heroes who have gone above and beyond the call of duty during the pandemic. Show your appreciation by nominating one – or a few – of them. Full details are on the last page of this newsletter. Good luck.

Additional Resources

US Department of Health and Human Services Guidance re: Telehealth

<https://telehealth.hhs.gov/>

Comprehensive information about Medicare billing/ COVID-19:

<https://www.cms.gov/files/document/03092020-covid-19-faqs-508.pdf>

CMS:

<https://www.cms.gov/files/document/summary-covid-19-emergency-declaration-waivers.pdf> . Additional information about COVID-19 and reopening can be found at:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-risk-assesment-hcp.html> and at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/return-to-work.html>.

Covered influenza, clinical diagnostic / COVID-19 lab tests:

<https://www.cms.gov/files/document/covid-ifc-2-flu-rsv-codes.pdf>

OIG Exclusions Program and searchable database:

<https://oig.hhs.gov/exclusions/>

STAY SAFE AND HEALTHY.



To cancel receiving the monthly Silver State ACO Newsletter please click *Unsubscribe* and type "Unsubscribe" in the subject box

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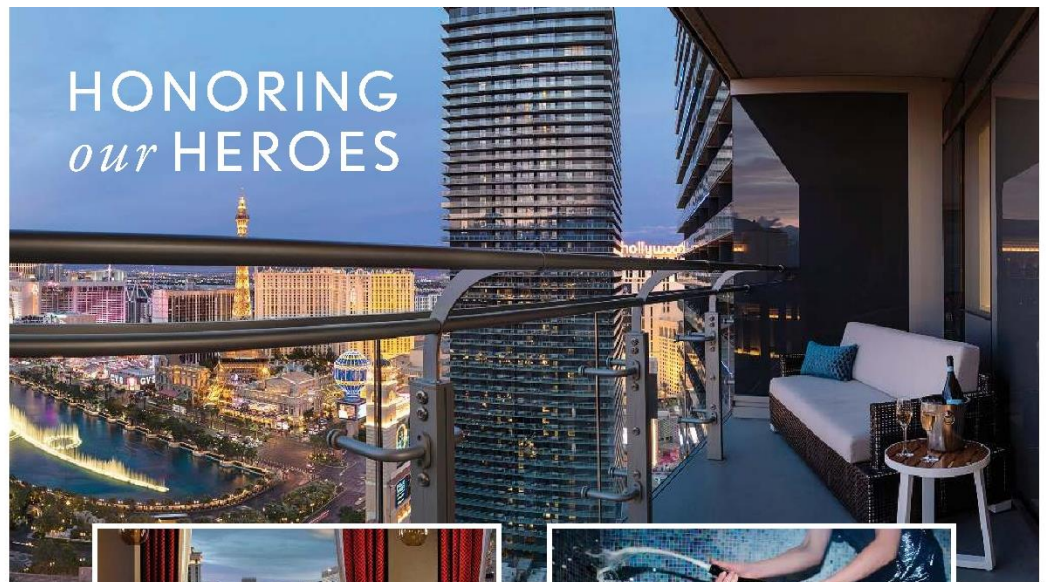
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NOMINATE A LAS VEGAS HERO TO WIN A VIP GETAWAY

The Cosmopolitan is proud to honor local frontline workers, healthcare professionals and countless others for unwavering dedication during these uncertain times. To show our appreciation, we invite you to nominate one of these unsung Las Vegas heroes.

10 WINNERS RECEIVE:

- 2 Nights in a Wraparound Terrace Suite
- Dinner at Scarpetta
- Champagne On Us

ONE GRAND PRIZE WINNER RECEIVES:

- 2 Nights in a Boulevard Penthouse
- 24-Hour Butler Service
- Table Service at Marquee
- Scenic Helicopter Tour
- Personal Photographer and more

FOR COMPLETE DETAILS AND TO ENTER, [CLICK HERE](#)
OR VISIT: WWW.COSMOPOLITANLASVEGAS.COM/DECADE-OF-MISCHIEF
Entries accepted February 1 - February 28, 2021.



Must be 21 years or older to win. Management reserves all rights. Terms and conditions apply.
Complete rules available on cosmopolitanlasvegas.com/decade-of-mischief

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