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#VegasStrong



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 Silver State ACO
Accountable Care Organization

2023 GAP CLOSURE CONTEST

October 6th - November 17th

WIN UP TO \$21,000

We are handing out prizes for each of the following SEVEN categories...

- Breast Cancer Screening
- Colorectal Cancer Screening
- Tobacco Screening and Cessation
- Influenza Immunization
- Fall Screening
- Controlling Hypertension
- Depression Screening & Follow-Up Plan

\$1,500 for the practice that completes the most per category **AND**
\$1,500 for the practice that completes the highest percentage
of attributed patients per category!

Your practice can win in one category or all seven!!!

Rules:

- Quality Coordinators will provide a Gap in Care Report that includes eligible patients
- Must submit your completed list to your Quality Coordinator no later than November 17th
- Supporting documentation must be scanned in the chart no later than November 17th
- All submissions must be documented in an excel spreadsheet
- Any gap closures qualify, including IllumiCare closures

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Southern Nevada
Wednesday, Nov. 1, 2023

Northern Nevada:
Thursday, Nov. 2, 2023

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GAP CLOSURE CONTEST

CMS requires that Silver State ACO file quality metrics on behalf of its Participant practices annually. Over the course of the year, SSACO quality coordinators work with their designated practices, reviewing medical records to confirm that protocols are followed, and that data is properly recorded. The quality coordinators deliver a Gaps-in-Care report to practices each month. This helps the practice to follow up with patients, as needed, and to accurately document all data points.

We are approaching year-end and, therefore, the last opportunity for practices to close gaps by collecting and documenting quality metrics. As an added incentive, Silver State ACO announces its 2023 Gap Closure Contest. Details are in the flyer on page one.

In years past, this contest has made some winners very happy! It has helped SSACO close gaps in care and earn outstanding quality scores which are a key factor in the ability to earn Shared Savings. We're aiming for nine consecutive years. Please help by working with your quality coordinator... and, perhaps, win a prize for yourself / your practice.

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER EMBARKING ON A NEW VENTURE

All companies need quality direction and leadership, especially when they are first launched. Since its establishment, Silver State ACO's Chief Financial Officer has been Wayne Salem, CPA, guiding the financial wellbeing of the company. Wayne has announced his decision to step down from the position of CFO in order to pursue other opportunities. We'd like to use this occasion to thank him for his guidance, help, and friendship over the years. Good luck, Wayne!



Attendees at Wayne's farewell dinner, including Larry Preston, SSACO CEO (far left), Keenan Underwood who will be stepping in as CFO (third from left in the white shirt), Jackie Summers (black and white striped shirt, front row), Wayne (center in black shirt), Linn Billingsley, Member of the SSACO Board of Directors (center, in blue shirt), Dr. Upinder Singh, previously SSACO CMO (toward the right, white shirt, tan slacks), Nancy Wendt, Manager of Sales Enablement, Scion Health (black shirt, far right standing beside Dr. Singh)

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QUALITY SPEAKS VOLUMES

Silver State ACO recently announced that it has earned Shared Savings for the eighth consecutive year. We're proud to have been able to assist our Participant practices over the years by clarifying new protocols and directives from CMS, making patient information regarding other providers more accessible, identifying opportunities for efficiencies and increased revenue, and by distributing earned Shared Savings. All this benefits the practice, its staff, and the patients.

One of the vehicles for sharing information is this monthly newsletter. We are pleased to be publishing the 100th issue this month. We invite all readers to let us know if there are particular interests or subjects they'd like included in future issues. (And for those who'd like to be entered to win a prize at the next practice meeting, please respond to this email with "100 issues. 8 successful years" in the subject line.)



NEW INITIATIVE TO PREVENT / REDUCE PROGRESSION OF KIDNEY DISEASE

Nevada Quality Improvement Organization **Comagine Health** is inviting primary care providers in the state to join the **CKD Screening and Management Learning Collaborative**, an initiative to improve early detection of chronic kidney disease (CKD) before it progresses to end-stage renal disease (ESRD).

An estimated 37 million Americans have CKD, many unknowingly, which means the need for increased testing, diagnosis and management has never been more urgent.

Screening protocols for CKD in patients with diabetes and hypertension can be cumbersome. **Quest Diagnostics** is working alongside **Comagine Health** to compile data from in-office lab testing to simplify processes for CKD screening in these high-risk populations.



Kidney Specialists of Southern Nevada (**KSOSN**), Silver State ACO's preferred nephrology group, has partnered with **Comagine Health** to assist with test result interpretation and consultation scheduling, when necessary. By participating in this collaborative, practices can save time ordering and then evaluating CKD screening results with the help of a new one-stop kidney health profile in its Quest Diagnostics reports. In addition, practices will receive 1:1 technical assistance from Comagine Health's quality improvement advisors who can help

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develop workflows and effectively use data to enhance screening processes.

The benefits continue beyond there. With a better understanding of how kidney disease progresses, providers will be able to increase ESRD prevention and also detect kidney disease earlier and more accurately. A correct diagnosis of CKD can lead to better documentation of illness burden in the practice’s patient population. Managing CKD leads to cost savings for the patient, for Medicare and for SSACO.

Silver State ACO primary care clinics that currently use Quest Diagnostics are urged to participate. Join Comagine in its mission to reduce the progression of CKD and improve the quality of care for patients today!

Email partnership@comagine.org to apply for this program. Space is limited and available slots will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis, so practices who use Quest as described above are advised to act quickly. For additional information, **see the detailed flyer attached to this email** or reach out directly to Dr. Bard Coats at bcoats@comagine.org with any questions.

Comagine Health, formerly HealthInsight, has served as the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) Quality Innovation Network-Quality Improvement Organization (QIN-QIO) in Nevada for more than 20 years. QIN-QIOs aim to improve care for Medicare beneficiaries and achieve the CMS goals of better health care, better health and lower health care costs. All services are offered at no cost to participating providers and medical offices in Idaho, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah and Washington.

QUALITY MEASURES SPOTLIGHT Transitional Care Management

In the [July Newsletter](#), which highlighted Annual Wellness Visits, we emphasized one goal at Silver State ACO - to prevent disease and promote wellness. This month we are shifting focus to another principal goal of Silver State ACO – to **reduce readmissions**. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) understands the importance that appropriate post-acute care can have on the overall health of the patient. In order to assist practices with achieving this goal, CMS has created, and encourages practices to perform, a [Transitional Care Management Visit \(TCM\)](#) after a patient is discharged from an inpatient facility.



SPOTLIGHT

For performance year 2022, Silver State ACO’s overall readmission rate was **14.94%** which is a 7.9% decrease from its 2021 readmission rate. This is below the current average rate of 15.10% for all Shared Savings ACOs.

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To put this into context, let's dig deeper into readmission statistics. Historically, 20% of Medicare patients have been readmitted within 30 days of discharge from an inpatient facility. The Medicare Payment Advisory Commission (MedPAC) has found that *three quarters* of those readmissions are potentially avoidable and account for an **estimated \$15 billion** in unnecessary annual health care expenditures. (Raval, Amit



D, et al. "30-Day Readmission Among Elderly Medicare Beneficiaries with Type 2 Diabetes." *Population health management* vol. 18,4 (2015): 256-64. doi:10.1089/pop.2014.0116).

Avoidable readmissions can be caused by poor transitions of care. These lead to negative health outcomes for the patient, and higher expenditures overall. When a patient is discharged from an inpatient facility, he/she can feel overwhelmed by new medications, tests, referrals, etc. The patient may not know "where to begin". TCM Visits were developed by CMS in order to encourage practices to assist their patients at this vulnerable time, aiming to reduce the occurrence of readmissions, aid in the wellbeing of the patient and control health care costs.

Three components are required to be met in order to bill for a TCM Visit:

1. Interactive Contact

- Contact with the patient or caregiver must be made or attempted within 2 business days of discharge, via telephone, email or in person.

2. Non Face-to-Face Services

- Review discharge information
- Interact with other healthcare professionals
- Educate the patient, caregiver, family, or guardian
- Establish or re-establish referrals
- Arrange needed community resources
- Review patient's need for or follow up, diagnostic tests and treatments.

3. Face-to-Face Visit

- Review/address all problems relating to admission
- Reconcile medications.

If all components are met, there are two different CPT codes practices may use for billing CMS, based on medical decision making and time frame within which the patient was seen:



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TCM: HIGH

- CPT: 99496
- Face-to-face visit within 7 days



TCM: MODERATE

- CPT: 99495
- Face-to-face visit within 14 days

Many practices have stated that they are not always aware that one of their patients has been discharged from, or even admitted to, an inpatient facility. Silver State ACO has worked closely with Experian Health to develop a system that provides real time email notifications to its Participant practices if/when its patient has been discharged from the hospital.

How do Transitional Care Management visits help your practice and patients? There are many benefits that come with performing TCMs:

- Revenue for the practice
- Strengthens provider and patient relationships
- Improves health outcomes
- Addresses gaps in care and improves quality scores
- Reduces readmissions
- Lowers healthcare spend
- Overall higher patient satisfaction.



publicdomainvectors.org

As always, please reach out to your designated Quality Coordinator if you have questions, need access to Experian, or are experiencing any issues.

SECURITY: SPOOKY SEASON

During the month of October, one might think of pumpkins, leaves changing colors, Nevada State Day and things that are scary, like losing a phone! Losing a cell phone or laptop is one of the top risk factors for cyberattacks. It is human error. Forgetting to log off a computer, leaving a work badge somewhere, or letting someone use credentials/access belonging to someone else are



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also examples of human error, some more blameworthy (lack of caring) than others (forgetfulness).

What's the worst that can happen?

Ransomware. Ransomware is a software-based attack that locks access to a system or database until a ransom is paid. How does this happen? From malicious cyberattacks, phishing attempts and human error. According to [The State of Ransomware in Healthcare 2022](#) survey, 66% of healthcare organizations were hit by ransomware in 2021, up from 34% in 2020.

How can you prevent attacks?

- Keep your credentials (badges, usernames & passwords) SAFE (49% of breaches involved stolen credentials)
- Keep access to software limited to those who need to use it
- Keep your laptop/cell phone safe and secure.



This spooky season, be on the look out and be safe. Protect your belongings from ghosts and goblins.

REMINDERS

- The annual, CMS required, CAHPS (Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems) Survey is underway. The CAHPS survey aims to understand how patients are being cared for or, more accurately, how they perceive the care they're getting, as well as their overall experience. The CAHPS score is part of an ACO's overall quality score, making it very important to the ultimate results of the ACO. Keep this in mind in all your interactions with patients.
- Preferred Providers are specialists and facilities whose mission – and results – align with Silver State ACO's. Using these providers helps maintain quality of care, reduces redundancies and duplications, and assists in a smooth continuum of care. When possible, please refer patients to practices and facilities who are part of SSACO's Preferred Provider Network. The full list can be easily downloaded from our website, www.silverstateaco.com.

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- DispatchHealth is the Silver State ACO preferred provider for in-home care which could avoid a patient trip to the emergency room. Please advise your patients to reach out to Dispatch if they need care when your practice is closed. There is a dedicated phone number for SSACO beneficiaries: **725-246-1973.**
- Please keep login credentials up to date for all Silver State ACO portals and programs. If you are in a supervisory position, please be sure to notify us immediately if a staff member, with log-in rights to any of the portals, leaves the practice.



PRACTICE MEETINGS

Attendance at practice meetings is highly encouraged. Attendees benefit from reviewing guidelines and protocols, learning new systems, hearing from specialists, and sharing ideas with others.

LAST Practice Meetings for 2023:

SOUTHERN NEVADA

Wednesday, November 1, 2023, 11:30 a.m. at Summerlin Hospital

NORTHERN NEVADA

*Thursday, November 2, 2023 – Meet & Greet at 5:00 pm, Meeting begins at 5:30
NNMC Sparks Medical Building – Ste 201*

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