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#VegasStrong

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CAHPS SURVEY

CMS requires that all ACOs, as well as other CMS ventures and programs, conduct an annual CAHPS (Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems) Survey. 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 survey is done by an independent third party. There is no cost to Silver State ACO Participants.

The CAHPS score is part of an ACO's overall quality score, making it very important to the ultimate results of the ACO. Yet, when CMS publishes the scores, they do so for the entire ACO, not practice by practice. This makes it particularly difficult for practices to improve in particular areas.

So, to improve the score, Silver State ACO Participant practices are encouraged to work on all areas covered by the CAHPS survey; by focusing on improving the patient experience in all ways. That may not be as difficult as it sounds.

Patients want to be appreciated and feel that someone is listening to them. We all understand that the workflow in a clinic is taxing, that time and staff are short. Take the time to use the patient's name. Research shows that using a person's name makes him/her feel respected. ("Yes, Mrs. Jones, I know that you've been waiting for a very long time. I'm sorry," instead of, "Yes. We're busy. Sorry").

If a patient feels respected, other inconveniences becomes less bothersome. The patient perceives everything in a more positive light. Everyone at a practice can help, from the front office staff who initially greet the patient, to the provider who should do what it takes to let the patient know that he/she is listening.



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Southern Nevada
August 2, 2023

Northern Nevada:
August 17, 2023

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It's beneficial to all practices to take steps to ensure that patients have the best experience possible. A satisfied patient is more likely to follow provider instructions and recommendations, thereby improving clinical outcomes – ultimately the main objective. And, a satisfied patient is also more likely to give high marks to the practice on the CAHPS survey, thereby raising the ACO's quality score.



QUALITY MEASURES SPOTLIGHT

Controlling High Blood Pressure

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 measure related to *Controlling High Blood Pressure* in patients with hypertension.



SPOTLIGHT

CMS requires patients with an active diagnosis of Essential Hypertension and who are between the ages of 18-85 to have an adequately controlled blood pressure reading at the patient's most recent visit. For this particular measure, CMS requires that the ACO report the last blood pressure reading taken during the calendar year.



CMS considers an "adequately controlled" blood pressure reading to be 139/89 mmHg or lower. If no blood pressure reading is documented during 2023, the patient's blood pressure is assumed to be "not controlled."

When auditing your charts for measure compliance, your assigned Quality Coordinator will first confirm that the patient has a diagnosis of hypertension, using the patient's active problem list/diagnosis list or the diagnosis listed in an office visit encounter. Once the diagnosis and age parameter are confirmed, the Quality Coordinator will then review the most recent patient visit for a documented blood pressure reading.

In order to assist in improving scores, for those patients out of range, make sure to re-take their blood pressure before you end the visit. If there are multiple readings documented on the same day, your Quality Coordinators will use the lowest systolic and diastolic reading to report. Also, you may bring the patient back in a week or two for a

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blood pressure recheck. This is especially helpful if the patient needed a refill or medication change.

Per CMS, a blood pressure reading taken by either a clinician, or a remote monitoring device (see definition below) and conveyed by the patient to their clinician is acceptable as long as it is the most recent blood pressure reading documented for the patient.

CMS has defined a “remote monitoring device” as either a home device or a device brought by a visiting nurse or caregiver utilized to take the patient’s blood pressure. It is the clinician’s responsibility and discretion to confirm the remote monitoring device is acceptable and whether the reading is considered accurate.



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

SSACO Participants Collect Nearly \$3 Million from CMS

During July, CMS (Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services) began making Advanced APM Incentive Payments to qualified Silver State ACO Participants who had earned it.

Silver State ACO is designated by CMS as an Advanced APM entity because it is at financial risk (although its participant practices are not!). Participating in an Advanced APM entity entitles providers to become Qualified Participants (“QP”) which, in turn, makes them eligible for this incentive.

The Advanced APM Incentive payment was calculated by CMS as 5% of the Qualified Participant’s estimated aggregate payments for all Medicare Part B covered professional services furnished by the eligible provider during 2022. We are thrilled that many of our providers qualified. Practices who participated in Silver State ACO for the 2021 Performance year have received almost **\$3,000,000** from CMS in Advanced APM Incentive payments. This is *above and beyond* what practices may have received as their share of the more than **\$9,800,000** in Shared Savings earned for 2021, distributed by SSACO in October 2022 to its Participants.

This is the second year in a row that Silver State ACO Participants earned almost \$3,000,000 in Advanced APM Incentive payments.



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Security: INTEGRITY

Integrity. Ultimately, that's what makes the difference in a company's or practice's success. Integrity is vital in everything a practice and its staff does. In particular, a practice must engage its staff to understand the importance of securing data and protecting patient's personal information, not just because it's required but because *it's the right thing to do*.

Doing the right thing should be paramount in all education programs. And, it seems to be contagious. Supervisors and senior staff should always set a good example.



Can integrity be programmed into (or be self-programmed by) the new Artificial Intelligence programs? That is a hot topic at the moment but, in reality, remains to be seen. For now, we are still in charge of doing the right thing... because it's the right thing to do.



REMINDERS

- Do not let your guard down. Criminals, physical and cyber, do not take summer vacations and are not listless while waiting for the kids to go back to school. This might be a good time to run an education program or contest to reinforce good security practices.
- 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, we urge our providers to 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. Click on the blue box marked "Affiliates" on the right hand side of the landing page.
- If you've done any work in the office over the summer, or have opened additional clinics, be sure that the current CMS / Silver State ACO poster is displayed in each one.

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- DispatchHealth is a 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.
- Silver State ACO has been successful over the years because we work as a team. Every practice and provider counts. Quality Coordinators and other SSACO staff are here to help. Please don't hesitate to reach out if you have questions or concerns.



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.

Remaining Practice Meetings for 2023:

SOUTHERN NEVADA

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

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

Wednesday, November 1, 2023 – Summerlin Hospital

NORTHERN NEVADA

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

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

(Note change of date above, please)

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

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