



## In This Issue

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As a team, we can achieve better care for our patients and better results for our practices.

## Visit our Website

[www.silverstateaco.com](http://www.silverstateaco.com)

*Who we are, who our members are, preferred providers, hospitalists, board of directors, management*

## Contact Us:

**(702) 608-0417**

[SilverStateACO@](mailto:SilverStateACO@)

[SilverStateACO.com](http://SilverStateACO.com)

## SSACO at CILI...



What a great event! Representatives from our current participants and preferred referral network, along with prospective members, gathered at Cili at the Bali Hai Golf Club on Wednesday evening, August 19<sup>th</sup>. In addition to great cocktails and wonderful food we were treated to presentations by Bruce Wiggins, Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors, and Larry Preston, Manager of Provider Relations and Physician Education, who talked about the future of healthcare, particularly regarding Medicare and Clark County. They outlined the benefits of Silver State ACO and how we help practices address challenges to their time, their patients, and their money. Linn Billingsley, Vice President of Kindred Integrated Markets in Las Vegas, gave a resounding and inspirational talk about the outstanding opportunity ACOs offer to private practice physicians. She reinforced how much impact we can have on patient health, as well as on profitability for the practices, if we work together as a team.

A highlight of the evening was the presentation made by Carolynne Parker of Health Endeavors. Health Endeavors is the IT company which Silver State ACO has contracted with to receive claims data from CMS and make it useable. And, boy, have they ever! In a very limited time Carolynne outlined some of the reports *now available* to SSACO participants and the value to practices. She presented numerous sample reports indicating

particular practices' quality scores, their use of in- and out-of-network referrals, as well as missed revenue opportunities. She highlighted the value of using the data to change behavior and outcomes.

If you were not able to join us at Cili but would like further information about the ACO or Health Endeavors, please call. We'd be happy to have an ACO representative come to your office.

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## Letters?

When CMS first established ACOs they required that each patient be notified, individually, that the practice had joined an ACO. At that time the patient was notified that he/she had the right to "opt out", i.e. to request that his/her health information not be shared, (albeit only with doctors who have seen the patient, anyhow). CMS identified which patients were assigned to our ACO. They gave us the list, including names, dates of birth, HIC numbers, and gender, but no addresses. As a result, we had to bother the practice managers for addresses so that we could notify all of the practice's attributed Medicare patients simultaneously. What a painful process.

CMS has now realized that this system was impeding the ACO's ability to coordinate care and effect change quickly and efficiently. And so, in June, as part of the final rules for next year, CMS changed the notification requirement. As of January 1, 2016 CMS will automatically allow ACOs to see claims information on all their attributed patients, unless patients opt out. Notification will only be via a posted notification in the office, and the only way to opt out will be by calling 1-800-Medicare.

This means a number of things for our practices:

- a. Sometime toward the end of this year, or beginning of next, we will be coming by to change the Notification which is hanging (right?!) in it's lovely frame on the wall in your office
- b. Good news - Next year we won't be bothering you for addresses, and
- c. We *will* be bothering you for addresses within the next few weeks. Claims data is what gives us the ability to help patients and to coordinate care. CMS will not allow any letters to be sent after October 1<sup>st</sup>. We **MUST** send as many notification letters as possible before the October 1<sup>st</sup> deadline. Otherwise, we will not see any CMS claims data on those patients until after January 1<sup>st</sup>.

Please help us by responding promptly when you are contacted by our team.

## Cards and Sleeves...

We have been delivering "I am a Silver State ACO Beneficiary" identification cards, along with plastic protective sleeves for patients to keep with their Medicare cards. We have gotten very positive feedback. What has your experience been? Please share your thoughts. Also, let us know when you need your stock replenished!

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## Mark your Calendars

PRACTICE MANAGERS MEETING SCHEDULED

Wednesday, October 14 at 7:30 am – Spring Valley Hospital – Breakfast will be served