

## Frequently Asked Questions

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) require us to send you the Cleveland Clinic Medicare Accountable Care Organization (ACO) Beneficiary Notification periodically. This does not change a patient's current health insurance policy or benefits. Physicians who participate in an ACO do so to help improve the quality and coordination of care delivered to their patients. Below are a few of the most common questions we receive:

### **What is an Accountable Care Organization (ACO)?**

- An ACO is a group of doctors and other healthcare providers who agree to work together with Medicare to provide the patient with the highest quality care.
- An ACO is not a Medicare Advantage Plan nor a Health Maintenance Organization (HMO), and patients do not enroll in an ACO. A patient's doctor and other healthcare providers have elected to participate in the Cleveland Clinic Medicare ACO.
- Patients still have Traditional Medicare. Their benefits, services, rights, and protections have not changed. Patients may still use any doctor or hospital that accepts Medicare.
- Patients who have Medigap or Medicare supplemental coverage still have that coverage. Their benefits, services, rights, and protections have not changed.
- The goal of the ACO is to take better care of patients by offering comprehensive and highly coordinated programs and additional services that improve patients' care.
- Medicare shares information about the patient's care with their healthcare providers in the ACO to assist in coordination of care and to reduce fragmentation and discontinuity in care.

### **How does a patient get into an ACO? Why am I being contacted about this program if I did not sign up to be in an ACO?**

- When a patient's doctor and/or other healthcare providers have elected to participate in the Cleveland Clinic Medicare ACO, the patient becomes a beneficiary of the ACO. CMS looks back at the prior year to determine if a patient was seen regularly by a clinician in an ACO to determine which patients need to receive this notification. Patients may also voluntarily indicate their primary care provider via Medicare.gov.
- You may opt-out of sharing your data with the ACO, but you may not opt-out of the ACO as a patient; only physicians can choose to be in or out of an ACO.
- We are contacting you because CMS requires that we let you know that your healthcare team is a part of an ACO, not because you have signed up for this program.

### **Can I still see my other regular Medicare doctors and health care providers, even though my primary doctor participates in an ACO?**

- Patients are still free to see any doctor who accepts Medicare.

### **Do I need to do anything after receiving this notification?**

- No action is required after receiving the notification and your coverage has not changed.

*For more information visit our website at [www.clevelandclinic.org/aco](http://www.clevelandclinic.org/aco)  
Questions may be directed to [ccaco@ccf.org](mailto:ccaco@ccf.org) or (216) 445-3666*