



## **BENEFICIARY INFORMATION NOTICE:**

### **Effingham Health System is Participating in a Medicare Shared Savings Program Accountable Care Organization**

#### **Accountable Care Organizations (ACOs): Providing Better, Coordinated Care for You**

Effingham Health System is participating in Deep South Regional ACO, a Medicare Shared Savings Program ACO. An ACO is a group of doctors, hospitals, and/or other health care providers working together with Medicare to give you better, more coordinated service and health care. Think of an ACO as a team made up of your doctors and other health care providers. We are working together to share important information and resources about your individual needs and preferences.

Doctors and hospitals in an ACO communicate with you and with each other to make sure that you get the care you need when you're sick, and the support you need to stay healthy.

#### **You Can Still Choose Any Doctor or Hospital**

**Your Medicare benefits aren't changing.** ACOs are **not** a Medicare Advantage plan, an HMO plan, or an insurance plan of any kind. You still have the right to use any doctor or hospital that accepts Medicare, at any time. Your doctor may recommend that you see particular doctors or health care providers, but it's always your choice about what doctors and providers you use or hospitals you visit.

#### **Having Your Health Information Gives Us a More Complete Picture of Your Health**

To help Deep South Regional ACO give you better, coordinated care, Medicare will share information with us about your care. The information will include things like dates and times you visited a doctor or hospital, your medical conditions, and a list of past and current prescriptions.

This information from other health care providers will give Effingham Health System and other health care providers in ACOs a more complete and up-to-date picture of your health. Over time, you may notice that you don't have to fill out as many medical forms that ask for the same information, you don't need to repeat medical tests because your results are shared among your health team, and other benefits because your providers are communicating with one another.



If you choose to let Medicare share your health care information with Deep South Regional ACO, it may also be shared with other ACOs in which your other doctors or health care providers participate. If you don't want your health care information shared, you can ask Medicare not share it.

### **Your Privacy is Very Important to Us**

Just like Medicare, ACOs must put important safeguards in place to make sure all your health care information is safe. ACOs respect your choice on the use of your health care information for care coordination and quality improvement.

**Yes, share my information:** If you want Medicare to share information about the health care you received with Deep South Regional ACO or with other ACOs in which your other doctors or health care providers participate, **there's nothing more you need to do.**

**No, please don't share my information:** If you do not want Medicare to share your health care information, you **need to** do the following:

- Call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). Tell the representative that your doctor is part of an ACO and you do not want Medicare to share your health care information. TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.
- If you change your mind in the future, call 1-800-MEDICARE and tell the representative what you have decided. We can't communicate with Medicare on your behalf.

Even if you decline to share your health care information, Medicare will still use your information for some purposes, like assessing the financial and quality of care performance of the providers participating in ACOs. Also, Medicare may share some of your health care information with ACOs when measuring the quality of care given by health care providers participating in those ACOs.

### **Questions?**

If you have questions or concerns, call us at 912-754-2662, or we can discuss them next time you're in our office.

You can also call 1-800-MEDICARE and tell the representative you're calling to learn more about ACOs, or visit [Medicare.gov/acos.html](https://www.Medicare.gov/acos.html).