



# How Southcoast Health physicians and hospitals are working to improve your health care

Southcoast Physicians Group is participating in Southcoast Accountable Care Organization, an Accountable Care Organization (ACO).



## What's an ACO?

### ACOs:

- ▶ Are groups of doctors, hospitals, and/or other health care providers that work together to improve the quality and experience of care you receive. Our practice chose to be part of an ACO because we think it will help us provide better care for our patients.
- ▶ **Don't limit your choice of health care providers.** Your Medicare benefits aren't changing. You'll have the right to visit any doctor, hospital, or other provider that accepts Medicare at any time, just like you do now. 
- ▶ Are evaluated by Medicare to see how well each ACO meets these goals every year. Those ACOs that do a good job can earn a financial bonus. ACOs that earn a bonus may use the payment to invest more in your care or share part of it with your providers. Sometimes, ACOs may owe a penalty if their care increases costs.
- ▶ Aren't a Medicare Advantage plan, an "all in one" alternative to Original Medicare, offered by Medicare-approved private companies. An ACO **isn't** an HMO plan, or an insurance plan of any kind. 



## What does this mean for my care?

- ▶ Giving health care providers the option of working with a group like **Southcoast Accountable Care Organization** is one of the ways Medicare helps us better coordinate your care and give you better quality care.
- ▶ To help us coordinate your health care better, Medicare shares information about your care with your providers; like dates and times you visited a health care provider, your medical conditions, and a list of past and current prescriptions.
- ▶ Sharing your data helps make sure all the providers involved in your care have access to your health information when and where they need it. This information helps **Southcoast Accountable Care Organization** give you better, more coordinated care by keeping track of the care and tests that you've already had. It may also make it easier to spot potential problems before they're more serious – like drug interactions that can happen if one doctor isn't aware of what another has prescribed.



## How can I make the most of getting care from an ACO?

- ▶ Ask your clinician about signing up for our secure online portal that gives you 24-hour access to your personal health information, including lab results and provider recommendations. This will help you make informed decisions about your health care, track your treatment, and monitor your health outcomes.
- ▶ Let Medicare know who you consider your primary clinician or "main doctor." Your primary clinician is the health care provider you believe is responsible for coordinating your overall care. If you choose a



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primary clinician, that clinician may have more tools or services to help with your care. We can tell you more about how to do this.

- ▶ Continue to let Medicare share your health care information to help us better coordinate and improve the quality of your care. If you **don't** want Medicare to share your health care information, **call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227)**. Tell them that your health care provider is part of an ACO and you don't want Medicare to share your health care information. TTY users can call 1-877-486-2048.



## Questions?

- ▶ For more details about our ACO, ask the front desk for a copy of the **ACO beneficiary notice**.
- ▶ If you have questions or concerns, call us at 844-744-5544 or we can talk about them during your visit in our office. You can also call 1-800-MEDICARE or visit [Medicare.gov/acos.html](https://www.Medicare.gov/acos.html).