



ACCOUNTABLE CARE ORGANIZATION SPOTLIGHT NEWSLETTER

January 14, 2021 | ISSUE 1

AT A GLANCE

UPCOMING DEADLINES

- **Public Reporting: January 22, 2021**
- **CMS Web Interface Quality Reporting: March 31, 2021**

ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS

- **CMS Web Interface Data Submission Support Calls**
- **January 1, 2021 Shared Savings Program ACOs Statistics**
- **Medicare Enrollment and SNF Star Rating Data Updated in ACO-MS**

EVENT ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **BCDA Office Hours**
January 21st | 2:00–3:00 p.m. ET
- **CMS Web Interface Biweekly Support Call**
January 27th | 1:00–2:30 p.m. ET

Not for Public Dissemination: The ACO Spotlight Newsletter is a biweekly publication by CMS for ACOs participating in the Shared Savings Program. It is distributed by email only to ACO contacts listed in CMS' ACO-MS. This newsletter is not intended to establish CMS policy and is for informational purposes only for the sole use of the individual(s) to whom it is addressed, and individuals associated with their ACO. The newsletter is not intended for public release. The ACO Spotlight Newsletter is published, produced, and disseminated at U.S. taxpayer expense. If you have received this in error, please notify the sender immediately by emailing SharedSavingsProgram@cms.hhs.gov.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

CMS Web Interface Submission Period: Now Open

As a reminder, the CMS Web Interface submission period opened on January 4, 2021, at 10:00 a.m. Eastern Time (ET) and closes on Wednesday, March 31, 2021, at 8:00 p.m. ET. Sign in to the [Quality Payment Program \(QPP\) website](#) to begin submitting data via the CMS Web Interface. During the submission period, you can take the following actions:

- Download your sample data.
- Upload your 2020 performance data.

To sign in to the QPP website, you need the following information:

- Your Health Care Quality Information Systems (HCQIS) Access Roles and Profile System (HARP) user identifier (ID) and password
- An appropriate user role associated with your organization

CMS will automatically accept the data entered at the end of the submission period. All data entered as of March 31, 2021, at 8:00 p.m. ET will be considered your final submission.

Additional Assistance

The QPP Service Center is available to answer questions related to the CMS Web Interface throughout the submission period. CMS encourages your group, virtual group, or ACO to submit questions early and often during the submission period. Contact the QPP Service Center at QPP@cms.hhs.gov or 1-866-288-8292 (Monday through Friday between 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. ET). Please consider calling during non-peak hours (before 10:00 a.m. and after 2:00 p.m. ET) to receive quicker assistance. Customers who are hearing impaired can dial 711 to be connected to a telecommunications relay service (TRS) Communications Assistant.

CMS Web Interface Data Submission Support Calls

CMS will host a series of support calls for groups, virtual groups, and ACOs that are reporting data for the quality performance category through the CMS Web Interface for the 2020 performance period. The support calls will highlight important information, provide updates on reporting quality data, and offer an opportunity for ACOs to engage in question and answer sessions with CMS subject matter experts.

To attend the following support calls, you must register for each by clicking on the links below. The calls will be held on **Wednesdays from 1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. ET.**

CMS WEB INTERFACE SUPPORT CALLS

[January 27, 2021](#)

[February 10, 2021](#)

[February 24, 2021](#)

[March 10, 2021](#)

[March 24, 2021](#)

After you register, you will receive a confirmation email that contains a calendar appointment for the support call and detailed information about joining the event.

2021 Public Reporting Clarification and Deadline Reminder

As a reminder, ACOs are required to update their public reporting webpage using the *PY 2021 Public Reporting Template and Instructions* by Friday, January 22, 2021.

Additionally, CMS is clarifying the instructions in the Quality Performance Results section. For Calendar Year (CY) 2019 quality performance results, **ACOs must continue to report the Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS®) quality scores on their public reporting webpage.**

The *PY 2021 Public Reporting Template and Instructions* is found in the Program Resources section of the Knowledge Library tab in the [ACO Management System \(ACO-MS\)](#) and includes instructions on how to populate the template and the locations of some ACO-specific information.

Please reference [42 CFR § 425.308](#) for additional details on public reporting requirements. All ACOs must update their public reporting webpage during the performance year when changes occur. In addition, ACOs should make corresponding updates in ACO-MS.

January 1, 2021 Shared Savings Program ACO Statistics: Now Available

On January 14th, CMS posted various data sets to [Data.CMS.gov](#) related to Shared Savings Program ACOs for the performance year starting January 1, 2021.

These data sets can be found on Data.CMS.gov under the Special Programs/Initiatives – Medicare Shared Savings Program category and include the following for PY 2021:

- ACO Coverage Map (available by January 15th)
- List of ACOs, including certain identifying information
- List of ACO Participants
- List of Skilled Nursing Facility (SNF) Affiliates

Lastly, CMS will also post the *Shared Savings Program Fast Facts* for January 1, 2021. This file will be accessible via the [Program Data webpage](#) on the [Shared Savings Program website](#).

Medicare Enrollment and SNF Star Rating Data Updated in ACO-MS

CMS recently updated ACO participant and SNF affiliate Medicare enrollment information and SNF affiliate star ratings under the CMS 5-Star Quality Rating System in [ACO-MS](#). CMS anticipates incorporating these ongoing updates within ACO-MS by the first of each month. The SNF affiliate star ratings posted by the first of the month reflect the most recent publicly available data on the [Care Compare website](#).

To review this information, ACOs may log into ACO-MS and navigate to the ACO Participants tab and the SNF Affiliates tab (if the ACO is approved for the SNF 3-Day Rule Waiver) for their ACO. Any ACO participant(s) or SNF affiliate(s) that may be non-Medicare-enrolled (per the most recent update from the Provider, Enrollment, Chain, and Ownership System ([PECOS](#))) and/or have a rating below three stars (per the most recent update from Care Compare on Medicare.gov) will display with a red

exclamation point warning icon or may be identified using the “Filter” option located next to the search bar. This information should help ACOs manage their ACO Participant List and SNF Affiliate List and may be used in discussions with ACO participants and SNF affiliates.

Refer to the *ACO Spotlight Newsletter* article “Enhanced Medicare Enrollment and SNF Star Rating Functionality in ACO-MS,” published on October 28, 2020, for further instructions and information on how to access and review Medicare enrollment and SNF star rating information in ACO-MS. This article also includes actions that ACOs may consider for addressing non-Medicare-enrolled ACO participants and SNF affiliates and SNF affiliates below three stars.

To locate this previous article, navigate to the *Spotlight Newsletters* section of the Knowledge Library tab in [ACO-MS](#), and download Issue 22 (October 28, 2020) named “MSSP *ACO Spotlight Newsletter* - 2020/10.”

2021 Shared Savings Program Report Schedule: Now Available

The 2021 Shared Savings Program Report Schedule is available in the Program Operational Schedules section of the Knowledge Library tab in [ACO-MS](#) by searching “2021 Shared Savings Program Report Schedule.” This report schedule provides information for ACOs participating in performance periods beginning January 2020 and January 2021. The report schedule dates are subject to change.

Update on Historical File Transfer to ACO-MS Data Hub

Please be advised that CMS has identified an issue in which historical reports delivered to ACOs that began their first agreement period on July 1, 2019, during CY 2019, were not successfully transferred to the [ACO-MS](#) Data Hub. All other ACOs can find reports delivered during CY 2019 by navigating to “2019” in the Program Year drop-down in the Data Hub and selecting the “Reports” subfolder. Please note that this issue did not impact reports delivered during CY 2020 for all ACOs. CMS will provide an update once this issue has been resolved. Please contact SharedSavingsProgram@cms.hhs.gov with any questions in the meantime.

ACO-MS Ending Support for Internet Explorer: Effective January 31st

Starting January 31, 2021, [ACO-MS](#) will no longer support the Internet Explorer browser. Although Internet Explorer may still allow users to log in, alignment and some features of ACO-MS, such as buttons, may no longer be compatible, and any updates to the system will not be available. Therefore, to access ACO-MS after January 31st, please use one of the following acceptable browsers: Google Chrome, Microsoft Edge, Mozilla Firefox, or Apple Safari.

RESOURCES NOW AVAILABLE

CMS Web Interface Resources: Now Available

The following 2020 CMS Web Interface resources are accessible through the [QPP Resource Library](#):

- [2020 CMS Web Interface Data Dictionary](#) (Created November 24, 2020)
- [2020 CMS Web Interface Excel Template with Sample Data](#) (Created November 24, 2020)
- [2020 CMS Web Interface Excel Template](#) (Created November 24, 2020)
- [Telehealth Guidance for 2020 CMS Web Interface](#) (Created December 10, 2020)
- [2020 CMS Web Interface Demo Videos](#) (Created December 17, 2020)
- [2020 CMS Web Interface Sampling Methodology](#) (Updated December 18, 2020)
- [2020 MIPS Assignment Methodology for CMS Web Interface and CAHPS for MIPS Survey](#) (Updated December 18, 2020)
- [2020 CMS Web Interface Frequently Asked Questions](#) (Created December 22, 2020)
- [2020 CMS Web Interface User Guide](#) (Created December 28, 2020)

Additional Resources

The QPP Resource Library contains links to the measure specifications, fact sheets, and other documents to assist with reporting. CMS encourages each person supporting your group, virtual group, or ACO with data submission to review the current CMS Web Interface resources.

You may also subscribe to the QPP Newsletter to stay informed. To sign up, visit the [QPP website](#). Scroll to the bottom of the homepage and enter your email address beneath “Sign Up for the QPP Newsletter.”

January CCLF Files

January *Claim and Claim Line Feed* (CCLF) files will be available to ACOs on January 15th and January 25th in the Data Hub tab in [ACO-MS](#). ACOs will receive one or two sets of CCLFs based on their assignment selections in 2020 and 2021.

ACO CLASSIFICATION	JANUARY CCLFs
ACOs continuing with Retrospective assignment in 2021	One set
ACOs continuing with Prospective assignment in 2021	Two sets
ACOs transitioning to a different assignment method in 2021	Two sets

ACOs received the Exclusion files for the two sets of CCLFs on January 12th. The files included the reporting month in the header to help identify the set of CCLFs to which the exclusions are applicable:

- Value of “12” indicates that the Exclusions are for the CCLFs being delivered on January 15th
- Value of “01” indicates that the Exclusions are for the CCLFs being delivered on January 25th

The January delivery timeline for the CCLF, Exclusion, and Medicare Beneficiary Identifier (MBI) Cross-reference (XREF) files are as follows:

FILE	DELIVERY	NAMING CONVENTION
Monthly Exclusion Files	January 12 th	P.A****.BNEX.Y**.Dyymmdd.Thhmsst
MBI XREF Files	January 14 th	P.A****.ACO.MBIY**.Dyymmdd.Thhmsst
CCLF Files	January 15 th	P.A****.ACO.ZCY**.Dyymmdd.Thhmsst
Second set of CCLF Files	January 25 th	P.A****.ACO.ZCY21.Dyymmdd.Thhmsst

ACOs should refer to the *CCLF Information Packet (IP)*, Version 31 (V31), and *ACO and ACO-OS Data Exchange User Guide (DEUG)*, V11, for additional information on the CCLF and Exclusion files.

The CCLF IP and the DEUG are available under Program Resources in the Knowledge Library tab of [ACO-MS](#).

For technical assistance, please contact the ACO Information Center at SharedSavingsProgram@cms.hhs.gov or 1-888-734-6433 (Option 1).

Case Study on Atlantic's Advance Care Planning Initiative

This case study describes the Atlantic's Management Services Organization (Atlantic) program to improve end-of-life care by equipping primary care providers (PCPs) to discuss advanced care planning with beneficiaries. Atlantic encourages PCPs to integrate advance care planning into annual wellness visits by (1) training them to combine the delivery of the two services, (2) sharing resources to make the discussions and documentation easier, and (3) providing data-driven quality improvement support to practices. Since launching the advance care planning program in 2017, Atlantic has seen a rise in the service across its managed ACOs. Atlantic's experience may be informative for other health care organizations interested in supporting advance care planning. CMS is tremendously grateful to Dr. Mark Calderon and Deborah Rodgers of Atlantic for participating in this case study.

Access this case study in the Webinars section of the Knowledge Library tab in [ACO-MS](#) by searching for "Atlantic's Management Services Organization Program to Increase Advance Care Planning."

Case Study on Nebraska Health Network's Data Management System

This case study describes how Nebraska Health Network (NHN) developed a data management system to more efficiently respond to the quality reporting requirements of the Shared Savings Program and to facilitate the implementation of performance improvement strategies. The ACO established this system and leveraged its analytic tools to improve the quality of care and reduce costs. NHN's experience is informative not only for new ACOs that are forming their analytic approach, but also for experienced ACOs that are using data to support strategic initiatives.

Many thanks to NHN for sharing the details of their data management system in the newest case study. Access the PDF, titled *Nebraska Health Network Case Study*, in the Webinars section of the Knowledge Library tab in [ACO-MS](#).

Case Study on Reliance Healthcare's Emergency Department Care Coordination Program

This new case study describes how Reliance Healthcare partners with emergency departments (EDs) to offer care coordination services to improve beneficiary outcomes and reduce the total cost of care. Reliance's experience may be informative for ACOs and other health care organizations that are interested in building partnerships with external providers to coordinate care for their beneficiaries. CMS is tremendously grateful to Eric McBride, Sarah Goehmann, and Julie Moser of Reliance ACO for participating in this case study.

Access the PDF, titled *December 2020 – Reliance Healthcare's Emergency Department Care Coordination Program*, in the Webinars section of the Knowledge Library tab in [ACO-MS](#).

EVENT ANNOUNCEMENTS

BCDA Office Hours

THURSDAY, JANUARY 21, 2021, 2:00 P.M.–3:00 P.M. EASTERN TIME

- [Join here](#) or [find your regional dial-in number](#)
- **Audience:** All ACOs
- **Description:** The Beneficiary Claims Data Application Programming Interface (API) (BCDA) enables ACOs participating in the Shared Savings Program to retrieve Medicare Part A, Part B, and Part D claims data for their assigned or assignable beneficiaries. On Thursday, January 21st, the BCDA Team will hold office hours with current and prospective users to solicit community feedback on reaching data parity with CCLFs and hear from ACOs about their interests in BCDA's work in 2021. The BCDA Team is excited to meet to discuss your thoughts about the API and how CMS can best meet your needs. Please visit the [BCDA website](#) and [BCDA Google Group](#) if you have any questions about the API. The BCDA Team appreciates ACOs' continued feedback and support as CMS continues to refine and improve the API.

CMS Web Interface Biweekly Support Call

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 27, 2021, 1:00 P.M.–2:30 P.M. EASTERN TIME

- [Register here](#)
- **Audience:** All ACOs and group reporters
- **Description:** CMS is hosting a series of support calls for ACOs and groups that are reporting data for the Quality Performance Category through the CMS Web Interface for PY 2020. The support calls will highlight important information and updates on reporting quality data and provide ACOs and groups with an opportunity to engage in question and answer sessions with CMS subject matter experts. For more information on the CMS Web Interface Biweekly Support Calls, view the [2020 Performance Period: CMS Web Interface Support Calls for ACOs and Groups Reporting Quality Data to CMS](#) informational flyer.

CMS Web Interface Biweekly Support Call

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2021, 1:00 P.M.–2:30 P.M. EASTERN TIME

- [Register here](#)
- **Audience:** All ACOs and group reporters
- **Description:** CMS is hosting a series of support calls for ACOs and groups that are reporting data for the Quality Performance Category through the CMS Web Interface for PY 2020. The support calls will highlight important information and updates on reporting quality data and provide ACOs and groups with an opportunity to engage in question and answer sessions with CMS subject matter experts. For more information on the CMS Web Interface Biweekly Support Calls, view the [2020 Performance Period: CMS Web Interface Support Calls for ACOs and Groups Reporting Quality Data to CMS](#) informational flyer.

CONTACT INFORMATION FOR ACOs

To help ACOs navigate questions regarding the Shared Savings Program.

ACO Information Center

SharedSavingsProgram@cms.hhs.gov

- Include your ACO ID (Axxxx) in the Subject line or text of the email
- Program operations and policy inquiries; technical inquiries related to MFT, CCLFs, the SSP ACO Portal, and ACO-MS; and assistance with user access to CMS systems, including password resets
- 1-888-734-6433 (select Option 1) or 1-888-734-6563 (TTY/TDD)

Quality Payment Program Service Center

QPP@cms.hhs.gov

- Inquiries related to MIPS, APMs, MACRA, CAHPS® for ACOs survey, quality measures, quality reporting for 2017 and future years, and CMS Web Interface
- 1-866-288-8292

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