



ACCOUNTABLE CARE ORGANIZATION SPOTLIGHT NEWSLETTER

November 13, 2020 | ISSUE 23

AT A GLANCE

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- **Highlights of the Care Coordination Toolkit**
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- **Using the Data Hub in ACO-MS to Access CCLFs and Reports**
December 15th | 1:30–3:00 p.m. ET

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PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

ACO-MS Data Hub Reminder: Download October and November Data Files and Reports

As a reminder, on Monday, September 28, 2020, CMS launched a new file delivery mechanism called the [ACO Management System](#) (ACO-MS) Data Hub. The Data Hub is a repository for the monthly Claim and Claim Line Feed (CCLF) files, Exclusion files, and static reports that CMS delivers to ACOs.

This new delivery mechanism allows ACOs to access, download, and archive data files and reports for the current and/or past program year(s). Additionally, the Data Hub offers a user-friendly experience and better file organization through folders, archival and search mechanisms, tooltips, and intuitive file display names.

All active ACO-MS users can access the Data Hub using their current Enterprise Identity Management (EIDM) login credentials and navigating through the Data Hub workspace to retrieve their data files and/or static reports. Users with administrative privileges (ACO Executive, Authorized to Sign (primary/secondary), CMS Liaison) must still extend invitations to new users in their organization who need access to ACO-MS.

The existing Managed File Transfer (MFT) mailbox and [SSP ACO Portal](#) will be retired on **December 31, 2020**. Until then, CMS is utilizing a phased-in approach to deliver new reports and data files to the Data Hub, SSP ACO Portal, and MFT mailbox:

Phase 2: November 2020

- Monthly CCLFs and Exclusion files will be delivered in the Data Hub, SSP ACO Portal, and MFT mailbox between November 9th and 13th.
- The 2020 Quarter 3 (Q3) reports will be delivered in the Data Hub, SSP ACO Portal, and MFT mailbox by November 12th.

Phase 3: December 2020

- Monthly CCLFs and Exclusion files will be delivered in the Data Hub, SSP ACO Portal, and MFT mailbox between December 10th and 14th.
- Historical CCLFs, Exclusion files, and static reports that were delivered prior to October 2020 will be available in the Data Hub at the end of December 2020.
- With the retirement of the SSP ACO Portal on December 31st, the enhanced reports will no longer be accessible.

Additional Resources

For additional information, refer to the following ACO-MS resources:

- The September 3, 2020 “CCLF User Group Webinar: New Delivery Mechanism for CCLFs and Reports” presentation and recording, available in the Webinars section of the Knowledge Library tab;
- The *ACO-MS Data Hub* tip sheet and the *Data Hub FAQs*, available in the Program Resources section of the Knowledge Library tab;
- The *CCLF Information Packet (IP)* and the *ACO and ACO-OS Data Exchange User Guide (DEUG)*, available in the Program Resources section of the Knowledge Library tab.

For technical assistance, please contact the ACO Information Center at SharedSavingsProgram@cms.hhs.gov, or call 1-888-734-6433 (Option 1) or 1-888-734-6563 (TTY/TDD).

Correction to Non-Claims Based Payment Measures in the Expenditure/Utilization Reports

CMS identified an issue in the Expenditure/Utilization (EXPU) reports for the component calculations for Non-Claims Based Payment (NCBP) Person Years and Total NCBP per Assigned Beneficiary beginning with Performance Year (PY) 2016 for ACOs under preliminary prospective assignment. This issue was corrected starting with the 2020 Q2 quarterly reports and only affected reports for ACOs under preliminary prospective assignment for Quarters 1, 2, and 3 when the assignment, based on a 12-month report period, did not coincide with a calendar year. **The issue only affected the component NCBP calculations for Quarters 1, 2, and 3 in years 2016 through 2019 and Quarters 1 and 2 for 2020 and did not affect total expenditures or any other measures in these EXPUs, any year’s Q4 or annual EXPU measures, or determinations of the amount of shared savings or losses.** Furthermore, beneficiaries within these reports who were eligible for all 12 months of the report period (over 90 percent of beneficiaries for most ACOs) were not affected by the calculation, further reducing the impact on NCBP component calculations.

The issue was a result of the criteria used to determine whether a payment was for an eligible or ineligible month during the rolling 12-month assignment window, and as a result incorrectly included or excluded certain months and payment amounts from the NCBP calculations. The impact of this issue was limited. When comparing the revised 2020 Q2 EXPU measure values with the original values, CMS found that the range of the impact on NCBP measures relative to total per capita expenditure was 0.00 percent to 0.06 percent; however, as noted, the issue did not have an impact on total per capita expenditures in any report, as the issue in the calculation was only in the component calculations for NCBPs. Among the 344 ACOs under preliminary prospective assignment, the correction of the calculation had no impact on per capita NCBP expenditures for 118 ACOs (34 percent). Among the remaining 226 ACOs (66 percent), the mean impact on NCBP expenditures was \$5.38 and the median impact was \$3.02. The correction had no impact on total NCBP person years for 186 ACOs (54 percent). Among the remaining 158 ACOs, the mean impact on NCBP person years was 4.63 and the median impact was 1.25.

30 Days’ Advance Notice Required for Voluntary Termination

As a reminder, an ACO must provide **at least 30 days’** advance written notice to CMS and to its ACO participants of its decision to terminate its Shared Savings Program agreement and the effective date of its termination.

ACOs must submit a termination request on or before December 1st to choose a termination effective date on or before December 30th. ACOs that choose a termination date on or before December 30th are not financially reconciled for purposes of determining shared savings. However, ACOs in a two-sided track/level that choose a termination date on or before December 30th are financially reconciled and may be liable for a prorated share of any determined shared losses. ACOs that choose a termination date of December 31st are financially reconciled and may qualify to receive shared savings or be liable for shared losses if applicable.

Please note the Health and Human Services Secretary’s declaration of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) Public Health Emergency (PHE) in January 2020 triggered the Medicare Shared Savings Program’s Extreme and Uncontrollable Circumstances Policy. The extreme and uncontrollable circumstance of the COVID-19 PHE will apply nationwide for the duration of the PHE for

the COVID-19 pandemic. Shared losses will be mitigated for all ACOs participating in a performance-based risk track—including Track 2, the ENHANCED Track, the BASIC Track, levels C through E, and the Track 1+ Model—based on the length of the PHE. Therefore, any shared losses an ACO incurs for PY 2020 will be reduced by at least 91.66 percent (for 11 of the 12 months, to date). If the PHE covers the full year (January through December 2020), any shared losses an ACO incurs for PY 2020 would be reduced completely, and the ACO would not owe any shared losses.

In order to notify CMS of its intent to voluntarily terminate, the ACO Executive or Authorized to Sign contacts (primary or secondary) must submit a voluntary termination request in [ACO-MS](#). For step-by-step instructions, review the *Submitting a Voluntary Termination Notice* tip sheet, found in the Program Resources section of the Knowledge Library tab in ACO-MS.

For additional information, review the program regulations on termination of the ACO Participation Agreement by the ACO ([CFR § 425.220](#)) and close-out procedures and payment consequences of early termination ([CFR § 425.221](#)), or contact the Shared Savings Program mailbox at SharedSavingsProgram@cms.hhs.gov. Include your ACO ID and copy your CMS coordinator on any correspondence.

ACO Learning System Feedback Focus Groups

The CMS ACO Learning System is interested in understanding what kind of support, events, and resources are most useful to ACOs. Your feedback will inform future learning systems to ensure that their offerings are valuable and actionable.

CMS invites you to share your feedback in a focus group with other Shared Savings Program ACOs. Focus groups are voluntary, last about 60 minutes, and take place in mid-November.

If you are interested in participating, email ACOLearningActivities@mathematica-mpr.com by Tuesday, November 17th, with “Learning System Feedback” in the Subject line. Include your ACO name and the names and email addresses of participants from your ACO.

RESOURCES NOW AVAILABLE

PY 2020 Quarter 3 Report Package: Now Available

On November 12, 2020, CMS released to ACOs their PY 2020 Q3 report packages via the [ACO-MS](#) Data Hub, the [SSP ACO Portal](#), and the MFT mailbox. The report package was sent as a zip file and included the following: the cover notice, *Assignment List Report (ALR)* (zip file), *Assignment Summary Report (ASR)*, *Aggregate Expenditure/Utilization Report*, *Non-Claims Based Payment File*, and *2020 Q2 Claims-Based Quality Measures Report*.

Resources

For additional information about the Q3 report package, please reference the cover notice and the PY 2020 report user guides: *Assignment List Report*, *Assignment Summary Report User’s Guide (Version 12)*, and *Annual and Quarterly Aggregate Expenditure/Utilization Report User’s Guide (Version 10)*. These user guides provide detailed information about the data elements included in the referenced program reports. These reports can be found in the Program Resources section of the Knowledge Library tab in ACO-MS by searching “Performance Year 2020 Report User’s Guides.”

CMS encourages ACOs to review the video walkthroughs for the *PY 2020 Quarterly Assignment Report and Expenditure and Utilization Report*. These videos can be found in the Program Resources section of the Knowledge Library tab in ACO-MS by searching “2020 Quarterly Assignment and Expenditure/Utilization Report Walkthrough Videos.” Note that these videos reflect updates made as of Q1 2020 and do not reflect content added to incorporate COVID-19 data.

November CCLF Files: Available November 13th

November CCLF files will be available to ACOs on November 13th for the PY 2020 assignable or prospectively assigned beneficiaries. These files will be available in the [ACO-MS](#) Data Hub and the MFT mailbox. The files will continue to be available in the MFT mailbox until the mailbox is retired on December 31, 2020.

The November delivery timeline for the CCLF, Exclusion, and MBI XREF files are as follows:

| FILE | DELIVERY | NAMING CONVENTION |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Monthly Exclusion Files | November 9 th | P.A****.BNEX.Y**.Dyymmdd.Thhmsst |
| MBI XREF Files | November 10 th | P.A****.ACO.MBIY**.Dyymmdd.Thhmsst |
| CCLF Files | November 13 th | P.A****.ACO.ZCY**.Dyymmdd.Thhmsst |

ACOs should refer to the CCLF IP, Version 29 (V29) and ACO and ACO-OS DEUG, V11 for additional information on the CCLF and Exclusion files.

The CCLF IP and the DEUG are available in the Program Resources section of the Knowledge Library tab in ACO-MS.

For technical assistance, contact the ACO Information Center at SharedSavingsProgram@cms.hhs.gov, or call 1-888-734-6433 (Option 1) or 1-888-734-6563 (TTY/TDD).

ACO Portal Enhanced Report: Expect Refreshed Data for EXPU and ASR PY 2020 Q3 Reports

During the week of November 23, 2020, ACOs can expect to gain access to their PY 2020 Q3 Expenditure Utilization and Assignment Summary data within the Enhanced Reports section of the [SSP ACO Portal](#). This release adds the Q3 report data for PY 2020 to three enhanced reports in the SSP ACO Portal for ACOs: *Assignment Summary Report, Trends for Tables 2-4 and 2-5; Expenditure/Utilization (EXPU) Report, All ACO Distributions Graphs; Expenditure/Utilization Report, Trends, Graphs, and Drill Down for Table 1.*

- The *Assignment Summary Report, Trends for Tables 2-4 and 2-5* provides tables that summarize the demographic and eligibility characteristics of your ACO’s assigned beneficiaries and provides counts and percentages of beneficiaries by classification for a selected reporting period (Table 2-4). It also provides the county distribution of your ACO’s beneficiary population (Table 2-5). You can compare data directly from several reporting periods in the same table.
- The *Expenditure/Utilization Report, All ACO Distributions Graphs* displays a set of bar charts showing the distribution of values for selected measures across all ACOs with the same assignment methodology for a specified performance period. The bar representing your ACO is the only solid bar, so you can see how your ACO ranks for each measure among similar ACOs.
- The *Expenditure/Utilization Report, Trends, Graphs, and Drill Down for Table 1* is based on information in the static *Aggregate Expenditure/Utilization Report* and compares your ACO’s expenditures and utilization against the all-ACO median and the national fee-for-service (FFS) population. It reveals trends by allowing direct comparisons for selected annual or quarterly periods. Through this report, you can also generate optional line graphs for measures that you select.

As a reminder, the enhanced reports will no longer be accessible with the retirement of the SSP ACO Portal on December 31, 2020. ACOs should download the data prior to December 31, 2020, if they wish to access it after the end of the year.

EVENT ANNOUNCEMENTS

MSSP Learning System Webinar: Building Trusting Relationships with Beneficiaries

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2020, 2:30 P.M.–4:00 P.M. EASTERN TIME

- [Register here](#)
- **Audience:** All ACOs
- **Description:** This webinar will feature approaches ACOs may consider for beneficiary engagement. A subject matter expert will highlight strategies for building trusting relationships between beneficiaries and care teams. Attendees will learn from other ACOs and discuss innovative options for engaging beneficiaries.

MSSP Learning System Webinar: Highlights of the Care Coordination Toolkit

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2020, 2:30 P.M.–4:00 P.M. EASTERN TIME

- [Register here](#)
- **Audience:** All ACOs
- **Description:** This webinar will feature an overview of the components of the *ACO Care Coordination Toolkit*, available on the CMS [ACO General Information webpage](#). The event will cover examples of strategies that ACOs can integrate and build upon in their own care coordination work. ACO speakers will describe their approaches to care coordination and how their initiatives and methods have evolved over time. Attendees will have an opportunity to ask questions throughout the webinar.

CCLF User Group Webinar: Using the Data Hub in ACO-MS to Access CCLFs and Reports

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2020, 1:30 P.M.–3:00 P.M. EASTERN TIME

- [Register here](#)
- **Audience:** All ACOs
- **Description:** CMS will provide information on how to access the CCLF files and the static quality and financial reports in the Data Hub tab of [ACO-MS](#). The delivery of CCLFs and program reports in the Data Hub will replace the delivery via the MFT mailbox and [SSP ACO Portal](#).

Registration Open: Fall 2020 Virtual Learning Collaboratives

This fall, CMS hosted a series of region-specific, virtual learning collaboratives (VLCs) for all ACOs and End-Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) Seamless Care Organizations (ESCOs) participating in the Shared Savings Program, Next Generation Accountable Care Organization (NGACO) Model, and Comprehensive ESRD Care (CEC) Model. There is one remaining Cross-regional VLC meeting. ACO staff who work on quality and performance improvement initiatives may be most interested in attending. VLCs feature presentations that highlight innovative ACO strategies for improving quality while lowering costs. Presenters also discuss key components for implementing improvement strategies, such as setting aims, using data to inform improvement, and engaging stakeholders. All ACOs are invited to register for the Cross-regional VLC meeting using the link below.

| CMS REGION | DATE | REGISTRATION |
|------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| Cross-regional Meeting | November 19 th | Register here by November 13 th at 5 p.m. ET |

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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