

AT A GLANCE

UPCOMING DEADLINES

- **Application Submissions to Shared Savings Program for a January 1, 2024 Start Date**
Due: May 18–June 15, 2023

EVENT ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **SSP Learning System Shared Learning Webinar: Strengthening Value-Based Care through Provider Partnerships**

April 27th | 3:00–4:00 p.m. ET | [Register](#)

PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENTS AND RESOURCES

- [Application and Change Request Cycle Documents Now Available: Application Opens May 18, 2023](#)
- [New Beneficiary Information Notification Guidance and FAQs: Now Available](#)
- [ACO-MS Password Policy Changes: Updated Information](#)
- [Seeking ACO Speakers for Summer Virtual Learning Collaboratives](#)
- [Summary of the VBC Learning System Webinar: Making the Business Case for Addressing Health Disparities](#)

PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENTS AND RESOURCES

Application and Change Request Cycle Documents Now Available: Application Opens May 18, 2023

CMS has released updated information for the Performance Year (PY) 2024 Application and Change Request Cycle. The sample applications are now available on the [Application Types & Timeline webpage](#). Beginning May 18, 2023, CMS will accept applications via the [ACO Management System \(ACO-MS\)](#). Application submissions are due no later than June 15, 2023, at 12:00 p.m. (noon) Eastern Time (ET).

The [Application Toolkit webpage](#) has also been updated. Key updated resources include:

- [Application Reference Manual](#)
- [Advance Investment Payments Guidance](#)
- [Shared Savings Program Participation Options for Performance Year 2024](#)
- [ACO Participant List and Participant Agreement Guidance](#)
- [Skilled Nursing Facility 3-Day Rule Waiver Guidance](#)
- [ACO Banking Form Instructions](#)
- [Repayment Mechanism Arrangements Guidance](#)

There will no longer be a separate Notice of Intent to Apply (NOIA) period for the Shared Savings Program application cycle. ACOs must register in ACO-MS in order to start their Shared Savings Program application during the application submission period. Refer to the [How to Complete ACO-MS Registration](#) tip sheet for more information.

Additionally, new ACO-MS functionality will be released that will provide immediate beneficiary assignment estimates for each ACO participant taxpayer identification number (TIN) at submission. Refer to the [Beneficiary Assignment Estimates in ACO-MS](#) tip sheet for more information.

Currently participating ACOs do not need to register or take any action to stay in their current Shared Savings Program Participation Agreement. The [Change Request Cycle for Performance Year Beginning on January 1, 2024](#) resource document has been posted in the ACO-MS Knowledge Library with the dates for this year's change request cycle and contains a detailed overview of all actions and deadlines available throughout the cycle.

New Beneficiary Information Notification Guidance and FAQs: Now Available

CMS has updated the *Beneficiary Information Notification FAQ* for PY 2023 and created the new *Beneficiary Notification and Education Guidance* to address new regulations and program requirements for the Shared Savings Program that are specific to the standardized written notices. These documents are now available in the Marketing and Beneficiary Education Toolkit (formally known as the Marketing Toolkit) in the Knowledge Library in [ACO-MS](#).

On January 1, 2023, CMS implemented new requirements for ACOs related to notifying beneficiaries about their provider's participation in an ACO. ACOs and ACO participants must provide a standardized written notification to beneficiaries prior to or at the first primary care service visit of their agreement period and a follow-up communication at the next primary care visit or within 180 days of receiving the initial standardized written notification. CMS is providing maximum flexibility to ACOs on how to conduct the 180-day follow-up communication and expects ACOs to hold a meaningful dialogue and engage with beneficiaries about the benefits of receiving care in an ACO. CMS is furnishing the *Beneficiary Notification and Education Guidance* to assist ACOs in meeting these requirements.

ACOs and ACO participants must continue to post signs in all facilities and make standardized written notices available upon request in all settings in which beneficiaries receive primary care services. All PDF version templates are available in the Marketing tab in ACO-MS as well as in the Marketing and Beneficiary Education Toolkit. The HTML versions will be available by Monday, April 24th for dissemination and can also be found in the Marketing tab as well as in the Marketing and Beneficiary Education Toolkit.

ACO-MS Password Policy Changes: Updated Information

CMS would like to provide you with some updated information regarding the new ACO-MS password requirements.

Beginning April 25, 2023, [ACO-MS](#) will update its password policy to comply with CMS Acceptable Risk Safeguards (ARS) 5.0 requirements. The new password requirements include the following:

- Minimum password length of 15 characters.
- Special characters are no longer required and are optional.
- After they are changed to comply with the new requirements, passwords will become permanent and no longer expire, as long as the account remains active.

ACO-MS users will be prompted to update their password using the new requirements with their next required password change.

Seeking ACO Speakers for Summer Virtual Learning Collaboratives

The Value Based Care (VBC) Learning System is pleased to announce the summer Virtual Learning Collaborative (VLC) series. The Learning System will host four VLCs in July and August, convening ACOs across the country to exchange ideas and collaborate on strategies to address Health-Related Social Needs (HRSNs) among their beneficiaries. The VBC Learning System is seeking ACOs to participate in a panel discussion related to building HRSN-focused initiatives. Topics may include, but are not limited to, identifying beneficiary needs, ensuring leadership buy-in, building external partnerships, and establishing referral processes.

Does your ACO have a HRSN-focused story to share?

Please express interest by completing the [speaker interest form](#) by close of business, Friday, May 19th. If your proposal is selected, a member of the VBC Learning System team will contact you to discuss a potential presentation. Please reach out to Juliana Conway (JConway@mathematica-mpr.com) with any questions.

Summary of the VBC Learning System Webinar: Making the Business Case for Addressing Health Disparities

This summary describes the cross-model health equity webinar, which focused on how VBC entities are building a business case for addressing health disparities in their beneficiary population. This webinar featured two entity speakers: Dialysis Clinic, Inc. (DCI) from the Kidney Care Choices (KCC) Model, and Temple Center for Population Health (TPCH) from the ACO Realizing Equity, Access, and Community Health (REACH) Model, who shared how they have approached this topic at their organizations.

The webinar summary and other materials can be found under the “Webinars” resource type by searching for “making the business case for addressing health disparities” in the Knowledge Library tab in [ACO-MS](#).

EVENT ANNOUNCEMENTS

SSP Learning System Shared Learning Webinar: Strengthening Value-Based Care Through Provider Partnerships

THURSDAY, APRIL 27, 2023, 3:00 P.M.–4:00 P.M. EASTERN TIME

- [Register Here](#)
- **Audience:** This event is open to all Shared Savings Program ACO staff. Team members involved in ACO operations (such as provider recruitment and retention) may be most interested in attending.
- **Description:** Join us on Thursday, April 27th at 3:00 p.m. ET for a webinar highlighting how ACOs identify and encourage providers to join their ACO. Attendees will have an opportunity to ask questions during the webinar. ACO presenters will discuss how their teams identify prospective providers across primary and specialty care fields, structure partnership agreements to advance the ACO’s value-based care goals, and foster collaboration to reduce turnover among their providers. The event will feature ACO presenters from Vytalize Health and CHI Health Partners.

CONTACT INFORMATION FOR ACOs

ACO Coordinator

To help ACOs navigate questions regarding the Shared Savings Program, **please contact your ACO Coordinator as your first line of contact.** These additional resources are also available:

ACO Information Center

Click the SSP Helpdesk icon (located within the [ACO-MS](#) banner)

Hours: Monday–Friday, 8:30 a.m.–7:30 p.m. ET

- Program operations and policy inquiries; technical inquiries related to program data and program reports; ACO-MS; and assistance with user access to CMS systems, including password resets

Quality Payment Program Service Center

QPP@cms.hhs.gov

Hours: Monday–Friday, 8:00 a.m.–8:00 p.m. ET

- Inquiries related to MIPS, APMs, MACRA, CAHPS® for MIPS survey, quality measures, quality reporting for 2017 and future years, and CMS Web Interface
- 1-866-288-8292
- For hearing impaired customers, please dial 711 to be connected to a telecommunications relay service (TRS) Communications Assistant

[CCSQ Support Central](#): Request Support, Schedule a Call, Chat Support

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