



News: For Immediate Release

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**ADVANCED PAYMENT ACCOUNTABLE CARE ORGANIZATION APPROVED ON
MARYLAND'S LOWER SHORE**

BALTIMORE, January 14, 2013 – MedChi, the Maryland State Medical Society, announced today that it is expanding participation in the Medicare Shared Savings Program to provide better care to patients while reducing costs. MedChi Network Services, a subsidiary of the medical society offering practice management services and support, formed the Lower Shore Accountable Care Organization (ACO) working with the members and lower shore medical societies. MedChi also worked with Health Prime International, a health care services and technology company located in National Harbor, Maryland. This is the third ACO that MedChi Network Services and Health Prime International collaborated on.

The physician-led ACO will work with patients and health care professionals throughout the community to coordinate care and enhance services. “We are very excited by this opportunity,” said Craig Behm, Executive Director for MedChi Network Services. “The lower shore of Maryland has a vibrant physician community. We are looking forward to working with those doctors to offer new, patient-centered services.”

The Affordable Care Act established ACOs to integrate care delivery across multiple health care providers. The goal of this and other Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS) initiatives is to achieve a three-part aim of better care for individuals, better health for populations, and lower costs.

CMS approved 106 new ACOs as of January 10, 2013. Of those recent awardees, 15 are Advance Payment Model ACOs, a subset of the program for physician-based or rural providers who are granted access to capital to invest in staff and infrastructure. The recent approval increases the number of ACOs around the country to over 250. There are a total of 35 Advance Payment Model ACOs, three of which were created by MedChi Network Services. The MedChi Network Service supported Advance Payment ACOs are the only three in the Mid-Atlantic region.

Gene Ransom, CEO of MedChi, is optimistic about the ACO program. “The ACO governing rules eliminate physician downside risk, and require ACOs to be led by the physicians within the ACO who are directly providing care,” he said. “This is an essential part of the program and guarantees that patient care remains paramount.”

Over the coming weeks and months, physicians participating in the ACO will work together to design patient-centered health care programs. From the patient perspective, there will be better integration of care between their primary care physician, specialists, and hospitals. A robust health IT infrastructure will allow for the real-time processing of information, which will reduce the likelihood of unnecessary testing. Care managers will work directly with Medicare beneficiaries to schedule appointment dates, manage medications, and answer health care questions around the clock.

The direction of health care is changing, and physicians and their patients must be at the forefront. MedChi, partner organizations, and most importantly, physicians, will continue to provide essential leadership to ensure that Marylanders receive the high quality of care they deserve.

About MedChi

MedChi, The Maryland State Medical Society, is a non-profit membership association of Maryland physicians. It is the largest physician organization in Maryland. The mission of MedChi is to serve as Maryland's foremost advocate and resource for physicians, their patients and the public health of Maryland. For more information, please visit www.medchi.org.

About MedChi Network Services

MedChi Network Services is a subsidiary of MedChi, The Maryland State Medical Society. The mission is to help physicians collaborate to enhance patient care and advance the private practice of medicine. MedChi Network Services is a state-designated management services organization offering small practice business support, and a leader in the field of health information technology.