

October 23, 2015

Friday Focus



Medicare Open Enrollment has Started

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) have formally announced the beginning of the Medicare Open Enrollment period for 2016. This annual event occurs from October 15th through December 7th. As part of this, the Acting CMS Administrator, Andy Slavitt, is reminding patients, "health needs can change in a year, so it is important for people with Medicare to use this time to check to see if they are getting the best price and best quality available." (CMS News, 2015, para 2)

The October 15th CMS News further elaborates on this point with multiple references to Medicare beneficiaries having access to a growing number of plans with high-star quality ratings. Just a few of the resource links the CMS has included are: www.medicare.gov, calling 1-800-MEDICARE, www.medicare.gov/pubs/pdf/10050.pdf, & www.medicare.gov/pubs/pdf/10050.pdf. Then again for state-by-state fact sheets members can access: <https://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Reach-Out/Find-tools-to-help-you-help-others/Open-Enrollment-Outreach-and-Media-Materials.html>

While we here at the SWHP and BSWH know we provide outstanding, high quality care for our members, this is a great opportunity to remind our members of the benefits we provide. Remember, part of the Stars rating is the member's perception of services rendered. At the same time, this presents all our providers both BSWH and contracted with the opportunity to discuss screening exams, labs, and medication compliance with our members.

- Have our female members had their mammogram in the past two years and a pap smear in the last three?
- For our diabetic members, have they had their annual eye exams and screening for nephropathy?
- For both our diabetics and cardiovascular members, are they on the appropriate statin therapy?
- For all our senior members, have they had their annual influenza vaccine, a pneumococcal vaccine in the past 10 years, and is their screening for colorectal cancer up to date?
- Are all the member's labs up to date or are they still showing as "Future?"
- Lastly, have all these tests, labs, screening, etc. been properly updated in the member's electronic health record?

If the answer to any of these is not 'Yes,' we still have time to get the members in before the end of the year.

By reviewing this simple information with our members, not only will they see the high quality of care we are providing, but we will ensure we receive the HEDIS and Stars ratings necessary to continue to grow as an organization.

References

CMS News (2015, October 15). *Medicare Open Enrollment Starts Today*. Retrieved from: <http://www.cms.gov/newsroom>

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Roy Champion".

Roy Champion, M.S. RN
Clinical Quality, RN

