Pioneer Accountable Care Organization (ACO)
Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is Partners HealthCare?
   a. Partners HealthCare is a not-for-profit health care delivery system that includes Massachusetts General Hospital, Brigham and Women’s Hospital, North Shore Medical Center, Newton-Wellesley Hospital, and Cooley Dickinson Hospital, among others. Emerson Hospital and Hallmark Health System (Lawrence Memorial Hospital of Medford and Melrose-Wakefield Hospital), Tri-County Medical Associates, and Pentucket Medical Associates are also affiliates of Partners HealthCare. Your primary care physician is affiliated with one of these hospitals.

2. Why did I receive this letter?
   a. To inform you that your primary care physician is participating in a care coordination program, called the Pioneer Accountable Care Organization (ACO). The program is designed to provide you better service and care. It will not cost you anything and your benefits are not changing.

3. I see Dr. “Smith” at “Primary Care Practice,” why did I get a letter from a Partners hospital?
   a. Dr. Smith is your primary care provider at “primary care practice,” but the “primary care practice” is affiliated with the Partners hospital reflected on your letter.

4. Do I need to do anything?
   a. No, you do not need to do anything. This letter is simply to inform you about the care coordination program that your primary care provider will be participating in.

5. Where did you get my information?
   a. Your primary care physician is participating in this program with his or her Medicare patients. Medicare provided us with your mailing information so a notification letter could be mailed to you.

6. I recently enrolled in a Medicare Advantage Plan, why did I receive this letter?
   a. If you recently enrolled in a Medicare Advantage Plan, and received a Pioneer ACO notification, please disregard the letter. You received this notice because our data has not been refreshed by Medicare yet. You will not receive future communications regarding the Pioneer ACO.

7. What is a Pioneer ACO?
   a. Your primary care physician is participating in a program, called a Pioneer ACO. An ACO is an opportunity to enhance the care you receive by allowing your physician to better coordinate with your care delivery team.
8. Are my benefits going to change?
   a. No, your benefits WILL NOT change. This IS NOT a Medicare Advantage plan or an HMO. Your health coverage, premiums and insurance arrangements are unaffected. You are always free to choose any doctor or hospital who accepts Medicare at any time.

9. Will it cost me anything?
   a. No, this program will not cost you anything.

10. How does this benefit me?
    a. Your primary care physician is participating in the program to provide improved high-quality care and service to you by being part of a better, more coordinated care team that works together. The goal is to ensure that you always get the right care at the right time in the right setting. Examples of high-quality care include having someone available to answer your questions about your health, review your medications, help you with seeing the right doctors and provide support when moving between care facilities.

11. Am I going to lose my doctor?
    a. No, you WILL NOT lose your doctor. You can continue to see your primary care provider as you normally do. And you are always free to choose any doctor or hospital who accepts Medicare at any time.

12. Do I have to change my doctor(s)?
    a. No, you DO NOT need to change your doctor. You can continue to see the same clinicians as you normally do. And you are always free to choose any doctor or hospital who accepts Medicare at any time.

13. Why is there a reward?
    a. Partners may be rewarded for providing you with better, more coordinated care. This means if our ACO is able to keep beneficiaries healthier than other Medicare beneficiaries by improving the coordination of care, reducing duplicative and unnecessary services and keeping you out of the hospital, we will receive a portion of the savings from Medicare. These rewards will be used to continue improving the care we deliver to our patients.

14. Where can I get more information?
    a. Please visit http://www.partners.org/For-Patients/ACO/ for more information. You may also call Medicare at 1-800-633-4227 (TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048) with additional questions or concerns. You may always speak with your primary care provider about any additional questions you might have about this new Pioneer ACO care coordination program.

15. Is this going to affect the care I get from my Case Manager?
    a. The Pioneer ACO program will not affect the care you receive from your case manager. You may still call your case manager at any time. You should continue to work with your case manager as you normally do. If you have any additional questions or concerns, please call the Care Coordination Program at 1-800-686-2719