



Dear MUSC Health patient,

This letter was sent to you because you are an Original Medicare beneficiary with both hospital and medical insurance coverage, and you get your care at one of our many MUSC Health locations across the entire state of South Carolina.

I want to make sure you're aware of MUSC's duty to give you the highest quality of care and to tell you how you can get the most value from your Medicare coverage.

Medicare has assigned you to the **MUSC Health Alliance Medicare Shared Savings program Accountable Care Organization (ACO)**. An ACO is a network of medical providers who work together to coordinate care for patients. Medicare automatically assigns all Original Medicare beneficiaries in the U.S. when they receive care from any of the many hundreds of ACOs across the country. Being assigned to an ACO won't change your Medicare benefits, the cost of your coverage and what you pay for doctor's appointments, or your right to choose any hospital or doctor that accepts Medicare, at any time, even if that hospital or doctor isn't part of an ACO.

As an ACO, the MUSC Health Alliance has taken **accountability** for the quality and cost of your care you receive. MUSC Health believes that better care helps people stay healthier, and when people are healthier, it costs less to take care of them.

What does this mean to you? What are we going to do?

We want to make sure you get the best care delivered in the best way. Your doctors, nurses, and care team at MUSC Health will communicate and coordinate your care. We will make sure you get the care that you need when you need it. We will also work to avoid care that isn't needed, like repeating the same tests.

If you are reasonably healthy, have not been in the hospital, and regularly visit your primary care provider, you may not see or feel any change in your care. We may give you tips on how to stay healthy, get checked early for cancer, and how to prevent serious illness.

Sometimes, MUSC Health will take a bigger role in helping you with your care. For example:

- If you have two or more chronic illnesses, we may reach out to you to guide your care, answer questions, and offer personalized support. We call this "chronic care management." If you have a specialized illness, we will have a complex care nurse contact you to make sure you have a plan.
- If you are discharged from the hospital, we may reach out to you to make sure your medications are right and that you are set for follow-up appointments.
- If you are in the Emergency Room, we may help you plan any next steps or appointments you need when you go home.

Our goal is to work with you in a way that makes sense for your health. We strongly believe that some hospital admissions and emergency room visits are avoidable; we will work hard to keep you healthy and at home! The healthcare system can be difficult to navigate, and our goal is to help guide you along the way!

We believe that an individual's health is impacted by things that happen outside of the health care system, such as access to transportation, safe housing, healthy food, and money for medications. We will ask questions about these issues and will help you with solutions.

We also believe that we can use information about the care that you have received in the past to help us predict your care needs in the future...and to keep you healthier.

MUSC Health care team members are focused on you and your health. It is our honor to be here with and for you.

What can you do?

Be open to communication. Sign up for [MUSC Health's MyChart](#). Please answer or return our calls.

Let us know if you are going to have difficulty with your treatment plan. For example, if you need help getting to your next doctor's appointment, let us know!

Prepare important documents. I strongly recommend that anyone with Medicare make sure they have important health documents ready, such as an **advanced directive** (it tells us what you want if you can't speak for yourself) and a **medical power of attorney** (it allows someone to make medical decisions for you when you can't). You can find versions of these online (for example, here <https://aging.sc.gov/programs-initiatives/legal-assistance-seniors>) as well as from attorneys and various agencies. Bring these with you if you are coming to an appointment, and we can file them in your medical record. Be open and talk to your family and medical decision-maker about what you want or don't want if something bad happens unexpectedly.

Take care of yourself! (Doctor's orders!) If you have questions about the ACO or how it works, please reach out to me at muscalliance@musc.edu. If you have questions about your care, please contact your care provider directly. If you have questions for Medicare, please give CMS a call at 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). Thank you for the privilege of providing for you, your health, and your health care.

With best wishes,



David Louder, M.D., MBA
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