

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
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CMS NEWS

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CMS Continues Efforts to Improve Quality of Care for People with Medicare
Top of Alabama Regional Council of Governments in Huntsville Named in Initiative to Improve Transitions from the Hospital to Home or Other Care Settings

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) announced today that Top of Alabama Regional Council of Governments in Huntsville became one of 20 additional organizations selected to participate in the Community-based Care Transitions Program (CCTP). Top of Alabama Regional Council of Governments in Huntsville and other new participants will join 82 existing sites, where community-based organizations are already working with local hospitals and other health care and social service providers. These groups are supporting Medicare beneficiaries who are at increased risk of being readmitted to the hospital while transitioning from hospital stays to their homes, a nursing home, or other care settings.

“Our partnership with Top of Alabama Regional Council of Governments in Huntsville will improve collaboration among caregivers and providers.” said Marilyn Tavenner, CMS Acting Administrator. “Reducing costly avoidable hospital readmissions is priority at CMS. When a patient leaves a hospital, coordinated care among doctors and other providers is a key tool to preventing complications that can arise.”

The CCTP was created by the Affordable Care Act and will help community-based organizations and hospitals form partnerships to prevent readmissions after beneficiaries leave the hospital. These new participating sites will work with CMS to provide support for beneficiaries as they move from the hospital to other care settings. Already these efforts are paying off, with an estimated 70,000 readmissions prevented last year as a result of declining rates of readmission.

Top of Alabama Regional Council of Governments in Huntsville, the designated local Area Agency on Aging, will partner with Huntsville Hospital, Highlands Medical Center, Athens-Limestone Hospital, and Crestwood Medical Center to deliver the Care Transitions Intervention to residents of Jackson, Limestone, and Madison Counties in northeast Alabama. The community-based organization will coordinate services across its partner hospitals and downstream providers for Medicare beneficiaries living in rural, urban, and mountainous areas.

The additional 20 CCTP participants will bring the total to 102 participants providing care transition services to over 700,000 beneficiaries in 40 states. Each participant enters into a two-year agreement with the CMS Innovation Center and will be paid a flat fee per beneficiary for care transition services.

Under the Affordable Care Act, the program may spend up to \$500 million over five years. Nearly one in five Medicare patients discharged from a hospital—approximately 2.6 million seniors—is readmitted within 30 days, at a cost of over \$26 billion every year. Any future opportunities to apply will be posted to innovation.cms.gov/initiatives/Partnership-for-Patients/CCTP/.

For more information, visit: <http://go.cms.gov/caretransitions>.

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