

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 1, 2014

Changes for Medicare Beneficiaries

Effective August 1, 2014, Medicare beneficiaries concerned about the medical care they received can contact KEPRO, the new Beneficiary and Family Centered Care Quality Improvement Organization (BFCC-QIO), to obtain a free case review. KEPRO is available to assist Medicare beneficiaries who have questions about whether they are ready for discharge from a hospital or home health agency, whether a health care service should be ended, or whether they should have been transferred from an Emergency Department to another hospital unit or home.

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) recently restructured the Quality Improvement Organization (QIO) Program in an effort to improve patient care and health outcomes, and save taxpayer resources. QIOs historically have been responsible for numerous quality improvement functions, including providing an infrastructure for national quality improvement initiatives across the continuum of care.

Effective August 1, 2014, the QIO program structure has changed and there are two QIOs in each state:

1. **Beneficiary and Family Centered Care Quality Improvement Organizations (BFCC-QIOs)** manage all beneficiary complaints and quality of care reviews to ensure consistency in the review process while taking into consideration local factors important to beneficiaries and their families.
2. **Quality Innovation Network - Quality Improvement Organizations (QIN-QIOs)** are responsible for working with providers and communities on data-driven quality initiatives to improve patient safety, reduce harm, and improve clinical care and transparency at local, regional, and national levels.

“As a BFCC-QIO, we look forward to working with Medicare beneficiaries in 33 states and the District of Columbia. KEPRO’s approach will maintain the local QIO presence and physician reviewers, while utilizing a centralized call center to make better use of government funds,” noted Gayle Smith, RN, MBA, Vice President of Public Programs at KEPRO.

KEPRO has worked as a QIO since 1985 to improve the health and protect the rights of Medicare beneficiaries. KEPRO’s President and CEO, Joseph Dougher, MBA, expressed, “We’re proud to have worked with providers to improve the quality of healthcare for Medicare beneficiaries over the past 29 years. Our focus remains on continuous improvement in an ever-changing healthcare environment.”

KEPRO operates a toll-free Medicare beneficiary helpline, available seven days a week. More information about KEPRO, including telephone numbers and details about the services offered for Medicare beneficiaries, is available at www.keproqio.com.

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