

LTC ACO Team Message

As we enter the final months of the 2026 Performance Year, our focus remains on sustaining the momentum built across the LTC ACO community and helping our partners translate that work into strong year-end performance.

Throughout the year, practices have continued to advance important clinical, quality, and operational priorities - from strengthening care coordination and transitions of care to improving preventive care, refining workflows, and using available data more effectively. As we move into Q4, the opportunity is to build on that progress with continued focus, consistency, and thoughtful execution.

STAYING FOCUSED ON PERFORMANCE

This point in the year naturally brings increased attention to performance and shared savings. We know many partners are also looking ahead to reconciliation and the timing of shared savings distributions. As additional information becomes available, LTC ACO will continue to communicate what we know and help practices understand the path ahead.

At the same time, our work together remains focused on the factors we can influence now: identifying opportunities within our populations, strengthening follow-up and care coordination, supporting quality performance, and using available reporting and resources to guide action.

PREPARING FOR WHAT COMES NEXT

The coming months will also bring important opportunities to prepare for 2027. Through continued Office Hours, Community Roundtables, implementation activities, and our upcoming Partner Summit, we look forward to creating additional opportunities for practices to learn from one another, engage directly with the LTC ACO team, and continue strengthening the strategies that support sustainable performance.

We are also continuing to invest in the tools, resources, and infrastructure that support our partners. More information on several of these efforts will be shared in the months ahead.

As always, we appreciate the continued engagement, collaboration, and commitment of the LTC ACO community. The work underway today is helping position our partners not only for a strong close to 2026, but for continued success in the year ahead.

Clinical Spotlight

Right Care, Right Time: Appropriate Hospice Utilization

For LTC ACO's frail, medically complex beneficiaries, palliative care and hospice can be essential tools for aligning treatment with patient goals. Earlier goals-of-care discussions, effective symptom management, and timely hospice enrollment can improve quality of life while helping avoid hospitalizations and other burdensome interventions that may no longer be consistent with a patient's preferences.

At the same time, appropriate hospice utilization in a total-cost-of-care model requires balance. As an Enhanced Track MSSP ACO, LTC ACO is accountable for hospice expenditures as part of total Medicare cost of care. A prolonged hospice stay may be entirely appropriate for some patients, but there are also circumstances in which continued enrollment may be driven more by the supportive services hospice provides than by a true terminal trajectory. This makes it important to reassess whether hospice remains the most appropriate level of care.

The goal, therefore, is not "more hospice" or "less hospice." It is optimal serious-illness care: identifying the right patients, having the right conversations early, and using palliative care and hospice at the right time and for as long as clinically appropriate.

We'll explore this balance in greater depth at the LTC ACO Partner Summit in Louisville on October 6, where Abraham Brody, PhD, RN, FAAN, will lead an in-depth discussion on optimizing palliative care and hospice for frail older adults within value-based care.



FURTHER READING

Read Dr. Lin's recent *Caring for the Ages* article, ['You're Already Delivering Value-Based Care You Just Aren't Paid for It Yet'](#), for additional perspective on value-based care in PALTC.

Building a Strong Foundation for Colorectal Cancer Screening

Colorectal cancer screening is a new quality measure for LTC ACO in 2026, making this year an important year to establish strong workflows and performance habits around identifying and addressing screening needs.

The 2026 CRC Completion Contest supports early, consistent attention to this measure and our broader quality goals. Remember, closing a gap does not always require a new screening - many beneficiaries may already have a qualifying screening within the applicable lookback period. Reviewing beneficiary history, documenting prior screenings, and ensuring appropriate coding are important parts of the process.

Use the weekly worklist to identify beneficiaries who may still need review or follow-up, and contact your Partner Engagement Manager or the Clinical Performance Team with questions.

Regulatory Updates

CMS's CY 2027 Medicare Physician Fee Schedule Proposed Rule includes several changes that could have meaningful implications for LTC ACO and our participating practices. Among the most notable are proposals intended to improve MSSP benchmark accuracy, reduce benchmark ratcheting, strengthen incentives for accountable care participation, and simplify certain quality reporting and CEHRT requirements.

For LTC ACO partners, the proposed rule also includes important physician payment considerations, including changes to the Physician Fee Schedule, new ACO-specific E/M payment incentives, proposed adjustments to nursing facility practice expense methodology, and updates affecting advance care planning and telehealth services.

CMS has also proposed delaying PY 2025 MSSP reconciliation, with results expected in November 2026 and shared savings payments anticipated in December. The delay would allow CMS additional time to implement potential benchmark protections that could apply retroactively to eligible ACO agreement periods.

While these provisions remain proposed and are subject to change through final rulemaking, they reflect continued movement toward accountable, risk-based care and address several longstanding concerns within the ACO community.

LTC ACO will continue to monitor the rulemaking process, evaluate potential operational and financial impacts, and provide participating practices with updates as additional information becomes available.

RESOURCE REMINDER

Read the Full Review:

Explore LTC ACO's detailed analysis of the CY 2027 CMS PFS Proposed Rule and its potential impact on ACO performance and participating practices.

[Read the Full Review Here →](#)

Watch the Replay:

Revisit the August 25 Office Hours session for highlights, context, and practice considerations related to the proposed rule.

[Watch the Replay Here →](#)





LTC ACO Partner Summit

October 5-6 | Louisville, Kentucky

We're looking forward to bringing the LTC ACO community together for two days of shared learning, practical discussion, and collaboration as we close out 2026 and look ahead to 2027.

This year's Summit will bring together LTC ACO leaders, participating practices, and invited experts to explore clinical, operational, and performance priorities shaping the year ahead. Attendees can expect focused discussions, peer perspectives, and practical strategies designed to support stronger performance across the ACO.

HIGHLIGHTS WILL INCLUDE:

- ◆ Clinical and utilization strategies for frail, medically complex populations
- ◆ Quality and performance priorities for the remainder of 2026 and into 2027
- ◆ Peer discussion and practice-level insights
- ◆ Opportunities to connect directly with LTC ACO leadership and Partner Engagement Managers

STILL INTERESTED IN JOINING US?

Partners are still welcome to attend either or both days. Contact your Partner Engagement Manager for registration assistance.

Looking Ahead: PY27 Implementation & Education Program

As we prepare for the 2027 Performance Year, LTC ACO will begin offering a series of Implementation & Education sessions designed to support new participating practices and provide existing teams with an opportunity to refresh key program knowledge.

The first sessions will focus on Compliance, with additional topics and dates to follow.

UPCOMING SESSIONS: COMPLIANCE

- ◆ **Monday, September 28**
8:00-9:00 a.m. ET
- ◆ **Wednesday, September 30**
2:45-3:45 p.m. ET

These sessions are open to all participating practice teams. Additional information and registration details will be shared through LTC ACO communications.

**Contact your Partner Engagement Manager
for more information.**

CATCH *the* REPLAYS

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Sept. 16 | Community Roundtable

From Risk to Action: Practical strategies for identifying and supporting higher-risk beneficiaries.

[Watch the Replay {Link TBD} →](#)

Sept. 22 | Office Hours

Quality Measure Strategies & Advanced Illness/ Frailty Exclusions Guidance for harder-to-achieve measures and applicable exclusions.

Watch the Replay {Link TBD} →