What is an Accountable Care Organization?

A Heart-smart Start to Your Day

Employees in the News
The aging population is currently at its highest level in history. As our community ages, healthcare costs rise, but what if there was a way to improve the quality of care for aging patients while simultaneously decreasing healthcare costs? According to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), this is precisely the goal of an Accountable Care Organization (ACO), and we are excited to announce that St. James Parish Hospital is now on board.

Healthcare providers are voluntarily teaming up to provide coordinated, high-quality, seamless patient care. Throughout this issue, we will describe exactly what an ACO is and outline several of the initiatives we have implemented as we transition to an ACO to better manage the care of traditional Medicare patients (without advantage plans).

We hired Care Coordinators to establish long-term relationships with Medicare patients and have been contacting qualifying patients to help them take advantage of their free annual wellness visit, which allows our Care Coordinators to monitor their health over time. We also implemented patient-satisfaction and outcome-based goals in our clinics, which measure not only the patient experience but also the effectiveness of treatment.

We look forward to continuing on the journey to improve care delivery, improve health, and reduce healthcare costs.

Mary Ellen Pratt, CEO, FACHE

What is an ACO?

Accountable Care Organizations (ACOs)—a new model of care made possible by the Affordable Care Act—are groups of doctors, hospitals, and other healthcare providers who come together voluntarily to give coordinated, high-quality care to the Medicare community they serve. Coordinated care helps ensure that patients, especially the chronically ill, get the right care at the right time, with the goal of avoiding unnecessary duplication of services and preventing medical errors. When an ACO succeeds in both delivering high-quality care and spending healthcare dollars more wisely, it can share in the savings it achieves for the Medicare program.

Benefits of an ACO

· Patients with chronic conditions have a healthcare team that works together to care for them.
· ACOs improve communication and coordination between different providers, reducing admissions and keeping people healthier.
· Doing the right thing for the right reason saves money and results in a better patient experience and better clinical outcomes.
· Caregivers of patients with chronic conditions can have peace of mind knowing a multidisciplinary care team is working together to care for their loved one.
· ACOs do not restrict patient choice. There are no HMO or managed-care restrictions.

St. James Parish Hospital—an ACO—is proud to voluntarily join an initiative that will help us better care for our traditional Medicare population while also holding us accountable for the quality of care we provide.
St. James Parish Hospital’s Care Coordinators are Registered Nurses who were hired specifically to form ongoing relationships with traditional Medicare patients in order to help them better manage chronic conditions across the continuum of care.

Our Care Coordinators will first ensure patients are taking advantage of free wellness benefits, such as an annual wellness visit. Through these visits, patients with chronic conditions are identified. The Coordinators will work with the patients and their Primary Care Physicians to develop personalized care plans to improve their overall health over time.

With open communication between the care team and patients, care plans can be adjusted according to each patient’s needs and progress.

We are excited to initiate this innovative model of care to improve health outcomes and the patient experience.

To see if you qualify, call your Primary Care Physician’s office and ask for a Care Coordinator.
Skipping breakfast can be hazardous to your heart.

Are you one of the approximately 30 percent of Americans who, according to the medical journal *Circulation*, skip breakfast each morning? You could be doing your heart a disservice. Research shows routinely eating breakfast decreases heart disease risk factors, including high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and diabetes.

One way eating breakfast benefits your heart is by cutting back on the desire to snack, scientists say. If you start your workday hungry, it’s easy to give in to temptation and munch on vending machine fare or dip into the ever-present box of doughnuts. But these options contribute to an increase in cardiac risk factors and lead to weight gain.

A study in *Journal of the American College of Cardiology* linked not eating breakfast to a higher chance of developing atherosclerosis, a condition in which plaque builds up in the arteries. Skipping breakfast has also been connected to stress that hampers metabolism, as well as increased levels of “hunger hormones.”

What is a Healthy Breakfast?

Of course, to reap the heart benefits of breakfast, you have to select the right foods. A great way to make sure this happens is to plan ahead. Taking some time on a Sunday afternoon to map out breakfast for the week means healthy choices—including foods that are easy to eat on-the-go—are ready and waiting and won’t slow your morning routine.

Good options include:
- **Low-fat or fat-free yogurt**—pair it with fresh fruit or granola.
- **Smoothies**—prepare baggies of frozen fruit ahead of time so all you have to do is blend!
- **Oatmeal**—sweeten with honey or add some vanilla extract.
- **Easy-to-make breakfast sandwiches**—choose low-fat cheese and other lean protein options, such as ham or Canadian bacon.

If you eat breakfast out and are hankering for pancakes, waffles, or toast, choose the whole-wheat varieties and pair them with fresh fruit.

To further ramp up your strategy for lowering your heart disease risk, pair a good breakfast with smart eating the rest of the day and a regular exercise routine. You’ll be well on your way.

Oatmeal on the Run

For a hearty, versatile breakfast that won’t stall your morning routine, it’s oatmeal to the rescue.

Ingredients
• 1/2 cup old-fashioned or steel-cut oats
• Water (enough to cover oats)
• Dash of vanilla extract

Instructions
1. Combine oats, water, and vanilla extract in a microwave-safe bowl and stir.
2. Microwave on high 2 1/2 to 3 minutes.
3. Top with fresh fruit, chopped nuts, or seeds such as chia or ground flaxseed.

Egg & Cheesewich to Go

Busy mornings make it easy to resort to unhealthy fast-food options. This homemade breakfast sandwich recipe is faster than sitting in the drive-thru.

Ingredients
• 1 large egg
• Chopped vegetables such as tomatoes, peppers, onions, or mushrooms
• 1 whole-wheat English muffin
• 1 slice 2-percent-fat cheese

Instructions
1. Whisk egg and chopped vegetables in a microwave-safe bowl.
3. Place egg-and-veggie combo on half an English muffin. Add cheese slice, and top with remaining muffin half.

Here for Your Heart

St. James Parish Hospital is the local leader in cardiac care. Whether you are looking for a cardiologist, diagnostic testing, or certain surgical procedures, we offer the care you need right here at home.

Through our clinical affiliation with Ochsner Medical Center–Kenner, we offer local, ongoing cardiology support to both inpatients and outpatients from a world-class facility. In addition, outpatients can see a cardiologist in the medical plaza next to the hospital. To schedule an appointment, call 225-258-2037.

Service Summary:
• Holter monitors
• EKGs
• Stress tests (including nuclear studies)
• Echocardiograms

Rev Up Your Heart Health!

February is American Heart Month. Take this opportunity to create a plan to lower your heart disease risk.
OUR CEO IS GOLDEN
Congrats to CEO Mary Ellen Pratt for being selected by the Louisiana Hospital Association for the Golden President’s Award. This honor is presented to one outstanding visionary each year who has led his or her organization to success and supported marketing efforts along the way.

LIFESAVERS
We are so thankful this year for team members who were recognized by the American Heart Association for using their CPR skills to bravely step in and save lives outside of work.

MASTER TRAINERS
We congratulate our newest TeamSTEPPS Leaders, who will help us educate all employees! TeamSTEPPS (Team Strategies and Tools to Enhance Performance and Patient Safety) was developed by the Department of Defense and the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality to integrate teamwork methods that help us deliver safe, high-quality, efficient care to our patients.
GREEN BELTS
We are extremely proud to announce that several team members are now Green Belt experts in Six Sigma, a disciplined, data-driven approach and methodology for eliminating defects in processes in order to increase patient satisfaction, quality, and financial savings.

LEADERSHIP TRAINING
We are very excited to announce that Director of Marketing Kassie Roussel was selected for the 1st Leadership River Region Program. Roussel and team also recently won 5 state marketing awards from the Louisiana Hospital Association.
Upcoming Education

JANUARY
❉ Diabetes Support Group
  Jan. 9, 2 p.m. (Meeting Room)
❉ Healthcare Provider/BLS/CPR
  Jan. 11
❉ Heartsaver CPR/First Aid
  Jan. 16
❉ Self-Breast Exam Class
  Call to schedule.

FEBRUARY
❉ Diabetes Support Group
  Feb. 6, 2 p.m. (Meeting Room)
❉ Healthcare Provider/BLS/CPR
  Feb. 8
❉ Heartsaver CPR/First Aid
  Feb. 20
❉ Self-Breast Exam Class
  Call to schedule.

MARCH
❉ Healthcare Provider/BLS/CPR
  March 8
❉ Diabetes Support Group
  March 13, 2 p.m. (Meeting Room)
❉ Heartsaver CPR/First Aid
  March 20
❉ Girls’ Puberty Class
  March 20, 6 p.m.
❉ Boys’ Puberty Class
  March 20, 6 p.m. Meeting Room
❉ Self-Breast Exam Class
  Call to schedule.

APRIL
❉ Diabetes Support Group
  April 10, 2 p.m. (Meeting Room)
❉ Healthcare Provider/BLS/CPR
  April 12
❉ Heartsaver CPR/First Aid
  April 17
❉ Self-Breast Exam Class
  Call to schedule.

Unless otherwise noted, classes begin at 8 a.m., and classes and events will be held in the Community Education Room at David Reynaud Medical Plaza, next to St. James Parish Hospital. The Meeting Room is in the hospital.

To RSVP, visit www.sjph.org/events. Click the event or class and fill out the online registration form. If you do not have access to a computer, call 225-258-5952.

St. James Parish Hospital complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex. Our facility also provides free language services.

ATENCIÓN: Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística.

ATTENTION: Si vous parlez français, des services d’aide linguistique vous sont proposés gratuitement.

Let’s Get Engaged

St. James Parish Hospital recently welcomed an upgraded patient portal in its Family Practice Clinics, Urology Clinic, and Surgery Clinic.

Patients of St. James West Bank Clinic, Poche Medical Clinic, Lutcher Family Clinic, St. James Urology Clinic, and St. James Surgical Specialists will now have the option to utilize the new patient portal, which can enhance service and efficiency and keep them better informed.

Benefits
• View lab results as soon as they are ready.
• Complete prescription refill requests and message office staff securely.
• Print and complete medical history forms to save time on appointment day.
• Securely pay bills online, with the option to save cards on file for future use.

How Do You Get on the Patient Portal?
In our clinics, we now ask for patient email addresses as part of the check-in process. If you are a new patient or giving your email address to us for the first time, you will get an email with directions on how to securely sign up for the portal. If you are a current patient with an email address, you should have received an invitation to the patient portal through the email address provided. If you did not receive an email invitation or cannot find it, contact your physician’s office.

Coming Soon!
Our clinics are also working with our patient portal provider to offer private web scheduling and online check-in. Patients will have the convenient option to schedule and change appointments without the need to call the office—saving time and allowing appointments to be made 24/7.

St. James Parish Hospital is a smoke-free workplace. Call 225-258-5952 to speak to a staff member.

St. James West Bank Clinic  225-265-3013
Lutcher Family Clinic  225-869-9890
Poche Medical Clinic  225-869-3493
St. James Urology Clinic  225-258-2070
St. James Surgical Specialists  225-258-2080

Like us!

This publication in no way seeks to serve as a substitute for professional medical care. Consult your physician before undertaking any form of medical treatment or adopting any exercise program or dietary guidelines.

St. James Parish Hospital is an equal opportunity provider and employer.