



Powered by The Valley Health System and Kindred Hospitals



May 2025

Newsletter

Volume

119

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#VegasStrong

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(702) 751-0834

SilverStateACO@
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Spotlight: Controlling High Blood Pressure

Millions of people across the world suffer from hypertension, the medical term for high blood pressure. As an Accountable Care Organization (ACO), our shared mission with participating practices is to enhance population health, reduce avoidable costs, and deliver high-quality care.

Despite our efforts, hypertension remains a persistent challenge—one that requires renewed focus and coordination among all levels of care.

Based on current statistics from [The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#), almost half of American adults have high blood pressure, yet only about one in four have their condition under control. It is estimated that each year we spend \$131 billion dollars nationally towards high blood pressure related expenses.

Individually patients with high blood pressure face [approximately \\$2,000 more in healthcare expenditures](#) each year compared to those without the condition. As hypertension is often referred to as the “Silent Killer” it is critical to understand this disease and what can be done to manage it.

Hypertension usually develops over time with family history, age, and race influencing the risk of developing the disease. However, medical conditions and lifestyle choices can contribute to the risk as well. Other behaviors that can contribute are unhealthy diets, physical inactivity, obesity, alcohol, and tobacco use. Gaps in care delivery, including inaccurate blood pressure readings and lack of timely follow-up, hinder the ability to manage this condition effectively. Severe complications can occur in patients with uncontrolled high blood pressure such as heart disease, kidney



NOTE:

Next Practice Meeting:
Southern Nevada
Wednesday, July 30, 2025

Northern Nevada:
Thursday, July 31, 2025

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failure, stroke, vision loss and other serious health conditions such as premature death.

The [American Heart Association](#) provides guidelines that categorized blood pressure into specific stages as indicated in the chart below:

Blood Pressure Categories



BLOOD PRESSURE CATEGORY	SYSTOLIC mm Hg (upper number)		DIASTOLIC mm Hg (lower number)
NORMAL	LESS THAN 120	and	LESS THAN 80
ELEVATED	120-129	and	LESS THAN 80
HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE (HYPERTENSION) STAGE 1	130-139	or	80-89
HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE (HYPERTENSION) STAGE 2	140 OR HIGHER	or	90 OR HIGHER
HYPERTENSIVE CRISIS (consult your doctor immediately)	HIGHER THAN 180	and/or	HIGHER THAN 120

©American Heart Association, 2019/2020 8/20

heart.org/bplevels

The good news is that high blood pressure can often be controlled, and steps can be taken to lower the risk of complications.

Strategies for Controlling High Blood Pressure:

- **Healthy Balanced Diet:** Adopting a diet that is rich in fruits, vegetables and whole grains can significantly lower blood pressure. The [DASH \(Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension\) diet](#) is particularly effective.
- **Exercise:** Engaging in regular physical activity, such as walking, for at least 30 minutes 5 days a week can help lower blood pressure.
- **Weight Management:** Maintaining a healthy weight or losing weight can help control blood pressure.
- **Limit Alcohol and Quit Smoking:** Reducing alcohol intake and quitting smoking can improve overall heart health and lower blood pressure.
- **Medication Compliance:** In addition to lifestyle changes, medication can help keep blood pressure at a healthy level.

Understanding the importance high blood pressure has on the Medicare population, The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) requires the ACO to report on the Medicare CQM Quality ID #236, **Controlling High Blood Pressure** (electronic CQM identifier 165v13). This ensures a focus on continuing to improve and maintain the health of each hypertensive patient.

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For this measure, CMS requires patients with an active diagnosis of hypertension **AND** who are between the ages of 18-85 to have an adequately controlled blood pressure reading at the patient's most recent visit in 2025. Please note that **CMS considers blood pressure to be "controlled" if it is 139/89 mm Hg or lower.** If no blood pressure reading is documented during 2025, the patient's blood pressure is assumed to be "not controlled."



We encourage your team to take a fresh look at how hypertension is being managed in your practice and to use the quality improvement tools we offer to help close any care gaps. This could mean reviewing patient data to find those with high blood pressure that isn't under control, scheduling more frequent follow-ups, or involving other

team members to support patients. Your role in controlling high blood pressure isn't just about meeting a measure—it's about making a real impact.

Please reach out to your Coordinator if you have any questions or need any assistance understanding the hypertension quality measure.

Networking Events

This past month Silver State ACO hosted two networking events for our participating providers. Our Northern Nevada event was held at Birdeez in Reno, NV and our Southern Nevada event was held at PopStroke in Las Vegas. Thank you to everyone who attended!

Northern NV Event at Birdeez



Pictured above Silver State ACO staff from left to right: Jessica Wright, Rhonda Hamilton, Savannah Rittenhouse, Richelle Heater, Dineen Caseday, Jessica Shepard, Sonia Ramirez, Sarah Whitney, Jacquie Cheun-Jensen, Amanda Almache, Angela Peters and Larry Preston.

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Pictured on the left
Marie Geisness, Ann
Johnson (Internal
Medicine Associates in
Carson City) and their
guests Sam Johnson
and Toni Adduchio.

Pictured right is
Reno Family
Physicians, Ty
Brooks, Dr. Uppu,
Dr. Ganta, Amanda
Gongaware & Dr.
Hornback.



Pictured above Northern Nevada Medical Group (left to right): Meli Ramirez, Chris George, Allison Ugalde, Dr. Denver Miller, Jackie Todd, Noah Bessette, Gay Thiel, Kailey Arington, and Dineen Caseday (Silver State ACO).

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Various attendees enjoying the miniature golf course at Birdeez



Pictured above Karla Perez (UHS) and Larry Preston (Silver State ACO)

Southern Nevada Event at PopStroke

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Pictured above Jennifer Johnson (Office of David Johnson MD), Angela Peters (Silver State ACO), Sarah Whitney (Silver State ACO), Dr. Anna Torres (Carson Medical Group), Dr. Will Torres (Carson Medical Group) & Sonia Ramirez (Silver State ACO)



Pictured left Angela Peters (Silver State ACO), Sarah Whitney (Silver State ACO), Andrew McMullin (UHS), Chris Loftus (UHS) and Sonia Ramirez (Silver State ACO)

Pictured right Dr. Talley and Rena Kantor enjoying the patio



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Pictured left from
UHS, Sam
Kaufman and Karla
Perez

Pictured right Dr. Tan (UMC) and
Ruby Hallig



Pictured below Calderon Medical Group



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Pictured right is Dr.
Shoemaker from Las Vegas
Medical Group with his
daughter Gabriella



Pictured left Arkos Health

Pictured right Karla Perez
(UHS), Larry Preston (Silver
State ACO) & Sheri Bodager
(Arkos health)



Thank you to all who attended our events!!

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Security – HIPAA

HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) was introduced nearly thirty years ago to help protect patient's PHI (Protected Health Information). The HIPAA Privacy and Security Rules established federal standards for protecting sensitive health information from disclosure without patient's consent.

The HIPAA Privacy rule addresses the use and disclosure of an individual's PHI by entities subject to the rule. All medical practices, regardless of size, are referred to as "covered entities" and are required to abide by HIPAA. The Privacy Rule also contains standards for patients to understand and control how their information is handled.

How patients control their own information and whether or not to allow it to be shared is their prerogative. Medical practices, however, do not have a choice. We must vigorously protect patient information.

Spring is an excellent time to review your practice's protocols and workflows to be sure that all staff is properly educated and that patient information is secure at all times.



Southern Nevada Women's Leadership Breakfast

Silver State ACO was a proud sponsor of the Southern Nevada Women's Leadership Breakfast. This annual event was held on April 24th from 8-12 pm, with keynote speaker Mayor Shelley Berkley and Jackie Van Blaricum of HCA.

Have you read this carefully? If so, to be entered to win a prize at the July practice meeting, you may respond to the newsletter email with "May Flowers" in the subject line.

Pictured left:
Attendees listening
to the panel
discussing how to
lead with
influence.



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Pictured right: Mayor Shelley Berkley presenting at the Women's Leadership Breakfast.



Join us at our next Practice Meeting!
2025 Quarterly Practice Meeting Dates

SOUTHERN NEVADA

Wednesday, July 30, 2025

Wednesday, Nov. 5, 2025

All Southern Nevada Practice meetings
will be held at Summerlin Hospital and
begin at 11:30 am. Lunch is served.



NORTHERN NEVADA

Thursday, July 31, 2025

Thursday, Nov. 6, 2025

Northern Nevada Practice Meetings will be held at Northern Nevada
Sparks Medical Building, Suite 201. Meet & Greet begins at 5 pm;
Meeting begins at 5:30.

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Available for secure reporting of any suspected compliance issues, without
fear of retribution.



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