

## HEALTH NEW ENGLAND

*Richard Swift, President & CEO, Health New England*

***There was a recent announcement about a new Medicare Advantage plan from Health New England, a Baystate Health Preferred HMO. How will this benefit Baystate Health, employees and the community?***

**Richard Swift:** We are just starting the annual enrollment period for Medicare advantage for next year. That's the period designated by CMS when Medicare beneficiaries can either sign up for or change plans, and this is one that we've worked on very closely with Baystate Medical Practices, with Dr. Boyle, and Dr. Arstenstein and their teams to put together a plan really closely relying on what Baystate Health needs. This is another example of the opportunity for Baystate Health and Health new England to collaborate on programs that can improve the access and cost of care to our community.

Medicare Advantage is partnership between private health plans like Health New England and CMS to offer a managed care like program to Medicare beneficiaries. Anyone currently on Medicare, or eligible for Medicare in January, can enroll in a Medicare Advantage plan. The Baystate Preferred Medicare Advantage plan has enhanced benefits for members who select the plan that include lower copayments, enhanced dental and vision coverage. In order to select a plan, the beneficiary has to select a Baystate Medical Practice primary care doctor. What we really want to do is keep the members within the Baystate Health system coming here for care, both for primary care and referral care. It's open to any Medicare beneficiary that lives in Hampden or Hampshire County.

It's intended to reduce the members' out of pocket costs for services, give them access to high quality care within the BMP practices, and hopefully have them coming back to Baystate Health more and more when they need care.