South Shore Physician Hospital Organization Joins Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Medicare HMO Blue (HMO) and Medicare PPO Blue (PPO) Networks

BOSTON — December 2, 2013 —South Shore Physician Hospital Organization (SSPHO) has announced it will join theBlue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts(BCBSMA) Medicare HMO Blue (HMO) and Medicare PPO Blue (PPO) provider networks in 2014.

Beginning January 1, BCBSMA Medicare members will be able to see any of the more than 250 physicians associated with SSPHO. The SSPHO was formed in 1994 by physicians and South Shore Hospital in Weymouth, MA. SSPHO member physicians include independent primary care and specialty care physicians who serve a diverse patient population across southeastern Massachusetts. BCBSMA commercial and Medex members can already see SSPHO-affiliated physicians.

"We are truly excited about this new partnership with the South Shore Physician Hospital Organization, who we consider to be one of the finest medical groups in the entire country," said Ken Arruda, Executive Director of Medicare Markets for BCBSMA. "Our Medicare members in southeastern Massachusetts will now have more physician options with this tremendous group, already known by our commercial customers for delivering high value, high quality health care."

BCBSMA offers the nation's top-ranked Medicare PPO plan in the country and is among the highest-rated Medicare HMO plans in the nation, according to the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA)[1]. The company recently announced a robust suite of affordable options available for Medicare beneficiaries in 2014.

"Our physicians look forward to serving Medicare beneficiaries in southeastern Massachusetts under these newly-available options," said David F. Demick, MD, Chairman, SSPHO Board of Directors. "The fact that these options include a zero-premium option is truly good news for seniors."

BCBSMA continues to be a trusted market leader in Massachusetts for people with Medicare, and serves more than 280,000 members. BCBSMA was recently accredited a 4.5 Star overall rating[2] on both its HMO and PPO plans by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), and achieved a 5 Star Customer Service rating.

Individuals with Medicare have until December 7 to choose the best Medicare Advantage and prescription drug coverage plan for their health care needs. To learn more about BCBSMA's Medicare coverage options, list of covered medications, and online and face-to-face sales seminars visit: www.bluecrossma.com/medicareor call **1-800-678-2265 (TTY: 1-800-522-1254)**, from 8 a.m. - 8 p.m., seven days a week.

Upcoming face to face seminars listed below. A sales person will be present with information and applications. For accommodation of persons with special needs at sales meetings call **1-800-522-1254**, from 8 a.m. - 8 p.m., seven days a week.

- Hyannis: December 3, 10:30 a.m., Resort and Conference Center, 35 Scudder Avenue.
- Randolph: December 4, 10:30 a.m., Lombardos, 6 Billings Street
- Brockton: December 5, 10: 30 a.m., The Shaws Center, 1 Feinberg Way

Medicare beneficiaries can also contact CMS for additional information by calling**1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227)** 24 hours a day, seven days a week, or a Serving the Health Information Needs of Elders (SHINE) counselor can be reached by calling **1-800-243-4636**.

About Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts (www.bluecrossma.com) is a community-focused, tax-paying, not-for-profit health plan headquartered in Boston. We are committed to working with others in a spirit of shared responsibility to make quality health care affordable. Consistent with our corporate promise to always put our 2.8 million members first, we are rated among the nation's best health plans for member satisfaction and quality.

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts is a HMO and PPO Plan with a Medicare contract. Enrollment in Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts depends on contract renewal. The benefit information provided is a brief summary, not a complete description of benefits. For more information contact the plan. Limitations, copayments, and restrictions may apply. Benefits, formulary, pharmacy network, premium and/or co-payments/co-insurance may change on January 1 of each year. You must continue to pay your Medicare Part B premium.

About South Shore Physician Hospital Organization
The South Shore Physician Hospital Organization is comprised of over 250 member physicians who are affiliated with South Shore Hospital (www.southshorehospital.org). The mission of SSPHO is to preserve and protect the value and quality of health care for the people who live and work in southeastern Massachusetts

[1] *NCQA's Health Insurance Plan Rankings 2013-2014 - Medicare*

[2]*Medicare evaluates plans based on a 5-Star rating system. Star Ratings are calculated each year and may change from one year to the next.*

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