Essence Healthcare is an HMO plan with a Medicare contract. Enrollment in Essence Healthcare depends on contract renewal.

Beginning in April 2018 through April 2019, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) will mail new Medicare cards to the approximately 60 million individuals who have Medicare. As a Medicare beneficiary, you can expect to receive a new card in the mail from CMS. The new card replaces your existing red, white and blue card and no longer uses your Social Security number as your Medicare ID. Your new card will have a new unique Medicare Beneficiary Identifier (MBI), which is a random combination of 11 numbers and letters.

**Q: Will your Essence Healthcare (HMO) coverage change?**

A: No. Your benefits will not change because you have a new red, white and blue Medicare card with a new MBI. You are enrolled in our plan, and you still have the same medical and prescription drug coverage as when you selected this plan. **Keep using your current Essence Healthcare membership card as you do today whenever you receive healthcare or obtain prescription drugs at a retail pharmacy.**

**Q: What do you need to do to get your new Medicare card?**

A: You do not need to do anything to get the new card. As a Medicare beneficiary, you will automatically receive the card in the mail, as long as CMS has your current mailing address. Moreover, you do not have to pay anything for it.

**Q: When can you expect to receive your new red, white and blue Medicare card?**

A: According to the CMS mailing schedule, you can expect to receive your new red, white and blue Medicare card sometime after June 2018. Because this mailing is so large, you may not receive your new Medicare card at the same time your neighbor does, but you will receive it, as long as CMS has your current address.

**Q: What changes will you see with the new Medicare card?**

A: The new Medicare card no longer displays your Social Security number. Instead, your card will feature a new Medicare identifier that is unique to you, called the Medicare Beneficiary Identifier. By replacing your Social Security number with the MBI, Medicare is helping protect you from fraud and identity theft, a growing concern among Americans of all ages.

**Q: When would you use the new Medicare card?**

A: First, be sure to keep your new Medicare card in a secure place. While we hope that you are satisfied with the services and benefits you receive from us for many years to come, if at some time in the future you decide to enroll in a different plan, you will need your new red, white and blue Medicare card.

**Q: Is your MBI Personally Identifiable Information?**

A: Yes. Please be sure to protect your personal information. CMS will never call you to verify your identity or ask you to provide bank account or credit card information, or your Social Security number or MBI. If a caller asks you for this information, hang up and call Medicare at 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227) 24 hours a day, seven days a week to report the call. TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048. Do not share your Social Security number, your MBI or your Medicare Advantage member ID number with an unknown caller.

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