



# 2021

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## Annual Notice of Change

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Essence Advantage (HMO)

Serving the Missouri counties of Jefferson, St. Charles, St. Louis and St. Louis City and the Illinois counties of Madison, Monroe and St. Clair

## ***Essence Advantage (HMO) offered by Essence Healthcare, Inc.***

# **Annual Notice of Changes for 2021**

You are currently enrolled as a member of Essence Advantage. Next year, there will be some changes to the plan's costs and benefits. *This booklet tells about the changes.*

- **You have from October 15 until December 7 to make changes to your Medicare coverage for next year.**
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### **What to do now**

#### **1. ASK: Which changes apply to you**

- Check the changes to our benefits and costs to see if they affect you.
  - It's important to review your coverage now to make sure it will meet your needs next year.
  - Do the changes affect the services you use?
  - Look in Sections 1.5 and 1.6 for information about benefit and cost changes for our plan.
- Check the changes in the booklet to our prescription drug coverage to see if they affect you.
  - Will your drugs be covered?
  - Are your drugs in a different tier, with different cost sharing?
  - Do any of your drugs have new restrictions, such as needing approval from us before you fill your prescription?
  - Can you keep using the same pharmacies? Are there changes to the cost of using this pharmacy?
  - Review the 2021 Drug List and look in Section 1.6 for information about changes to our drug coverage.
  - Your drug costs may have risen since last year. Talk to your doctor about lower cost alternatives that may be available for you; this may save you in annual out-of-pocket costs throughout the year. To get additional information on drug prices visit [go.medicare.gov/drugprices](https://www.go.medicare.gov/drugprices). These dashboards highlight which manufacturers have been increasing their prices and also show other year-to-year drug price information. Keep in mind that your plan benefits will determine exactly how much your own drug costs may change.

- Check to see if your doctors and other providers will be in our network next year.
  - Are your doctors, including specialists you see regularly, in our network?
  - What about the hospitals or other providers you use?
  - Look in Section 1.3 for information about our Provider/Pharmacy Directory.
- Think about your overall health care costs.
  - How much will you spend out-of-pocket for the services and prescription drugs you use regularly?
  - How much will you spend on your premium and deductibles?
  - How do your total plan costs compare to other Medicare coverage options?
- Think about whether you are happy with our plan.

## 2. **COMPARE:** Learn about other plan choices

- Check coverage and costs of plans in your area.
  - Use the personalized search feature on the Medicare Plan Finder at [www.medicare.gov/plan-compare](http://www.medicare.gov/plan-compare) website.
  - Review the list in the back of your Medicare & You handbook.
  - Look in Section 2 to learn more about your choices.
- Once you narrow your choice to a preferred plan, confirm your costs and coverage on the plan's website.

## 3. **CHOOSE:** Decide whether you want to change your plan

- If you don't join another plan by December 7, 2020, you will be enrolled in Essence Advantage.
- To change to a **different plan** that may better meet your needs, you can switch plans between October 15 and December 7.

## 4. **ENROLL:** To change plans, join a plan between **October 15** and **December 7, 2020**

- If you don't join another plan by **December 7, 2020**, you will be enrolled in Essence Advantage.
- If you join another plan by **December 7, 2020**, your new coverage will start on **January 1, 2021**. You will be automatically disenrolled from your current plan.

### **Additional Resources**

- Please contact our customer service number at 314-209-2700 or 1-866-597-9560 for additional information. (TTY users should call 711). Hours are 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., seven days a week. You may reach a messaging service on weekends from April 1 through September 30 and holidays. Please leave a message and your call will be returned the next business day.

- This document may be available in other formats such as braille, large print or other alternate formats.
- **Coverage under this Plan qualifies as Qualifying Health Coverage (QHC)** and satisfies the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act's (ACA) individual shared responsibility requirement. Please visit the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) website at [www.irs.gov/Affordable-Care-Act/Individuals-and-Families](http://www.irs.gov/Affordable-Care-Act/Individuals-and-Families) for more information.

### **About Essence Advantage**

- Essence Healthcare is an HMO plan with a Medicare contract. Enrollment in Essence Healthcare depends on contract renewal.
- When this booklet says “we,” “us,” or “our,” it means Essence Healthcare, Inc. When it says “plan” or “our plan,” it means Essence Advantage.

## Summary of Important Costs for 2021

The table below compares the 2020 costs and 2021 costs for Essence Advantage in several important areas. **Please note this is only a summary of changes.** A copy of the *Evidence of Coverage* is located on our website at [www.EverythingEssence.com](http://www.EverythingEssence.com). You may also call Customer Service to ask us to mail you an *Evidence of Coverage*.

Cost	2020 (this year)	2021 (next year)
<b>Monthly plan premium*</b> * Your premium may be higher or lower than this amount. See Section 1.1 for details.	\$0	\$0
<b>Maximum out-of-pocket amount</b> This is the <u>most</u> you will pay out-of-pocket for your covered Part A and Part B services. (See Section 1.2 for details.)	\$1,900	\$1,900
<b>Doctor office visits</b>	Primary care visits: \$0 per visit  Specialist visits: \$35 per visit	Primary care visits: \$0 per visit  Specialist visits: \$35 per visit
<b>Inpatient hospital stays</b> Includes inpatient acute, inpatient rehabilitation, long-term care hospitals and other types of inpatient hospital services. Inpatient hospital care starts the day you are formally admitted to the hospital with a doctor's order. The day before you are discharged is your last inpatient day.	\$265 copay per day, per stay: Days 1-7  \$0 copay per day, per stay: Days 8 and beyond	\$265 copay per day, per stay: Days 1-7  \$0 copay per day, per stay: Days 8 and beyond

Cost	2020 (this year)	2021 (next year)
<p><b>Part D prescription drug coverage</b> (See Section 1.6 for details.)</p>	<p>Deductible: \$0</p> <p>Copay/Coinsurance during the Initial Coverage Stage:</p> <p><b>Preferred Pharmacy 30-day Supply</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drug Tier 1: \$0 copay</li> <li>• Drug Tier 2: \$0 copay</li> <li>• Drug Tier 3: \$39 copay</li> <li>• Drug Tier 4: \$75 copay</li> <li>• Drug Tier 5: 33% coinsurance</li> <li>• Drug Tier 6: \$0 copay</li> </ul> <p><b>Standard Cost Share Pharmacy 30-day Supply</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drug Tier 1: \$4 copay</li> <li>• Drug Tier 2: \$12 copay</li> <li>• Drug Tier 3: \$47 copay</li> <li>• Drug Tier 4: \$100 copay</li> <li>• Drug Tier 5: 33% coinsurance</li> <li>• Drug Tier 6: \$0 copay</li> </ul>	<p>Deductible: \$0</p> <p>Copay/Coinsurance during the Initial Coverage Stage:</p> <p><b>Preferred Pharmacy 30-day Supply</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drug Tier 1: \$0 copay</li> <li>• Drug Tier 2: \$0 copay</li> <li>• Drug Tier 3: \$39 copay</li> <li>• Drug Tier 4: \$75 copay</li> <li>• Drug Tier 5: 33% coinsurance</li> <li>• Drug Tier 6: \$0 copay</li> </ul> <p><b>Standard Cost Share Pharmacy 30-day Supply</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drug Tier 1: \$4 copay</li> <li>• Drug Tier 2: \$12 copay</li> <li>• Drug Tier 3: \$47 copay</li> <li>• Drug Tier 4: \$100 copay</li> <li>• Drug Tier 5: 33% coinsurance</li> <li>• Drug Tier 6: \$0 copay</li> </ul>

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## SECTION 1 Changes to Benefits and Costs for Next Year

### Section 1.1 – Changes to the Monthly Premium

Cost	2020 (this year)	2021 (next year)
<b>Monthly plan premium</b> (You must also continue to pay your Medicare Part B premium.) There is no change for the upcoming benefit year.	\$0	\$0

- Your monthly plan premium will be *more* if you are required to pay a lifetime Part D late enrollment penalty for going without other drug coverage that is at least as good as Medicare drug coverage (also referred to as “creditable coverage”) for 63 days or more.
- If you have a higher income, you may have to pay an additional amount each month directly to the government for your Medicare prescription drug coverage.
- Your monthly premium will be *less* if you are receiving “Extra Help” with your prescription drug costs. Please see Section 6 regarding “Extra Help” from Medicare.

### Section 1.2 – Changes to Your Maximum Out-of-Pocket Amount

To protect you, Medicare requires all health plans to limit how much you pay “out-of-pocket” during the year. This limit is called the “maximum out-of-pocket amount.” Once you reach this amount, you generally pay nothing for covered Part A and Part B services for the rest of the year.

Cost	2020 (this year)	2021 (next year)
<b>Maximum out-of-pocket amount</b> Your costs for covered medical services (such as copays) count toward your maximum out-of-pocket amount. Your costs for prescription drugs do not count toward your maximum out-of-pocket amount. There is no change for the upcoming benefit year.	\$1,900	\$1,900 Once you have paid \$1,900 out-of-pocket for covered Part A and Part B services, you will pay nothing for your covered Part A and Part B services for the rest of the calendar year.



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## Section 1.3 – Changes to the Provider Network

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There are changes to our network of providers for next year. An updated Provider/Pharmacy Directory is located on our website at [www.EverythingEssence.com](http://www.EverythingEssence.com). You may also call Customer Service for updated provider information or to ask us to mail you a Provider/Pharmacy Directory. **Please review the 2021 Provider/Pharmacy Directory to see if your providers (primary care provider, specialists, hospitals, etc.) are in our network.**

It is important that you know that we may make changes to the hospitals, doctors and specialists (providers) that are part of your plan during the year. There are a number of reasons why your provider might leave your plan, but if your doctor or specialist does leave your plan you have certain rights and protections summarized below:

- Even though our network of providers may change during the year, we must furnish you with uninterrupted access to qualified doctors and specialists.
- We will make a good faith effort to provide you with at least 30 days' notice that your provider is leaving our plan so that you have time to select a new provider.
- We will assist you in selecting a new qualified provider to continue managing your healthcare needs.
- If you are undergoing medical treatment you have the right to request, and we will work with you to ensure, that the medically necessary treatment you are receiving is not interrupted.
- If you believe we have not furnished you with a qualified provider to replace your previous provider or that your care is not being appropriately managed, you have the right to file an appeal of our decision.
- If you find out your doctor or specialist is leaving your plan, please contact us so we can assist you in finding a new provider and managing your care.

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## Section 1.4 – Changes to the Pharmacy Network

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Amounts you pay for your prescription drugs may depend on which pharmacy you use. Medicare drug plans have a network of pharmacies. In most cases, your prescriptions are covered *only* if they are filled at one of our network pharmacies. Our network includes pharmacies with preferred cost sharing, which may offer you lower cost sharing than the standard cost sharing offered by other network pharmacies for some drugs.

There are changes to our network of pharmacies for next year. An updated Provider/Pharmacy Directory is located on our website at [www.EverythingEssence.com](http://www.EverythingEssence.com). You may also call Customer Service for updated provider information or to ask us to mail you a Provider/Pharmacy Directory. **Please review the 2021 Provider/Pharmacy Directory to see which pharmacies are in our network.**

## Section 1.5 – Changes to Benefits and Costs for Medical Services

We are changing our coverage for certain medical services next year. The information below describes these changes. For details about the coverage and costs for these services, see Chapter 4, *Medical Benefits Chart (what is covered and what you pay)*, in your 2021 *Evidence of Coverage*.

Cost	2020 (this year)	2021 (next year)
<p><b>Acupuncture for chronic low back pain</b></p>	<p>A referral from your PCP is required.</p> <p>Prior authorization is <u>not</u> required.</p>	<p>A referral from your PCP is required for a visit with a doctor or other health care professional but is <u>not</u> required for covered acupuncture treatments.</p> <p>Prior authorization is required.</p>
<p><b>Dental services</b></p>	<p>You pay a \$35 copay for the following preventive dental services when provided by a DentaQuest contracted dental provider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Periodic oral evaluations – two every calendar year</li> <li>● Horizontal bitewing x-ray images (up to four) – once every calendar year</li> <li>● Routine cleaning – two every calendar year</li> <li>● Fluoride treatments – one every calendar year</li> </ul>	<p>You pay a \$0 copay for the following preventive dental services when provided by a DentaQuest contracted dental provider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Periodic oral, limited oral evaluation, comprehensive oral exam – two every calendar year</li> <li>● Horizontal bitewing x-ray images (up to four) – once every calendar year</li> <li>● Routine cleaning – two every calendar year</li> <li>● Fluoride treatments (topical application) – one every calendar year</li> </ul>

Cost	2020 (this year)	2021 (next year)
<b>Dental services</b>  (continued)		We made changes to how we report dental services benefits to Medicare to add more detail. However, the only change to this benefit is the copay change listed above.
<b>Diabetes self-management training, diabetic services and supplies</b>	Prior authorization is required for therapeutic custom-molded shoes and inserts.	Prior authorization is required for some items (e.g., diabetic custom-molded shoes and inserts, insulin pumps, continuous glucose monitors and their associated supplies such as sensors, transmitters, receivers, and readers).
<b>Outpatient diagnostic tests and therapeutic services and supplies</b>	If you receive multiple services at the same location on the same day, individual service level copays may apply.	If you receive multiple services at the same location on the same day, only the maximum copay applies.
<b>Over-the-counter items</b>	There is a quarterly credit of \$100. Up to two orders per quarter with no rollover of dollars from quarter to quarter.	There is a quarterly credit of \$95. Up to two orders per quarter with no rollover of dollars from quarter to quarter.

Cost	2020 (this year)	2021 (next year)
<b>Physician/Practitioner services, including doctor's office visits</b>	Remote access technologies (web/phone-based technologies) are <u>not</u> covered.	<p>You have access to virtual/telehealth visits with select network providers such as PCPs and specialists. You pay the same copay for the virtual/telehealth visit as if the services were received in the provider's office. Copay range \$0-35.</p> <p>A referral from your PCP or prior authorization may be required.</p>
<b>Skilled nursing facility (SNF) care</b>	<p>You pay a \$20 copay, per day, per stay: Days 1-20.</p> <p>You pay a \$125 copay per day, per stay: Days 21-100.</p>	<p>You pay a \$0 copay, per day, per stay: Days 1-20.</p> <p>You pay a \$125 copay per day, per stay: Days 21-100.</p>
<b>Special Supplemental Benefits for the Chronically Ill</b>	<p>You pay a \$0 copay for diabetic eye exams and a \$35 copay for all other Medicare-covered eye exams (performed by a specialist such as an ophthalmologist or optometrist).</p> <p>There is a prerequisite for special supplemental benefits for the chronically ill.</p>	<p>You pay a \$0 copay for diabetic eye exams and a \$35 copay for all other Medicare-covered eye exams (performed by a specialist such as an ophthalmologist or optometrist).</p> <p>There is <u>not</u> a prerequisite for special supplemental benefits for the chronically ill.</p> <p>We made changes to how we report this benefit to Medicare. However, what you pay did not change.</p>

Cost	2020 (this year)	2021 (next year)
<b>Vision care</b>	<p>You pay a \$35 copay for a routine exam (limited to one per calendar year).</p> <p>Your plan pays up to \$200 for lenses, frames, or contact lenses.</p>	<p>You pay a \$0 copay for a routine exam (limited to one per calendar year).</p> <p>Your plan pays up to \$200 combined for lenses, frames, eyeglasses (lenses and frames), and contact lenses.</p>

## Section 1.6 – Changes to Part D Prescription Drug Coverage

### Changes to Our Drug List

Our list of covered drugs is called a Formulary or “Drug List.” A copy of our Drug List is provided electronically. **You can get the *complete Drug List*** by calling Customer Service (see the back cover) or visiting our website ([www.EverythingEssence.com](http://www.EverythingEssence.com)).

We made changes to our Drug List, including changes to the drugs we cover and changes to the restrictions that apply to our coverage for certain drugs. **Review the Drug List to make sure your drugs will be covered next year and to see if there will be any restrictions.**

If you are affected by a change in drug coverage, you can:

- **Work with your doctor (or other prescriber) and ask the plan to make an exception** to cover the drug.
  - To learn what you must do to ask for an exception, see Chapter 9 of your *Evidence of Coverage (What to do if you have a problem or complaint (coverage decisions, appeals, complaints))* or call Customer Service.
- **Work with your doctor (or other prescriber) to find a different drug** that we cover. You can call Customer Service to ask for a list of covered drugs that treat the same medical condition.

In some situations, we are required to cover a temporary supply of a non-formulary drug in the first 90 days of the plan year or the first 90 days of membership to avoid a gap in therapy. (To learn more about when you can get a temporary supply and how to ask for one, see Chapter 5, Section 5.2 of the *Evidence of Coverage*.) During the time when you are getting a temporary supply of a drug, you should talk with your doctor to decide what to do when your temporary supply runs out. You can either switch to a different drug covered by the plan or ask the plan to make an exception for you and cover your current drug.

Formulary exception approvals are typically valid for 12 months.

Most of the changes in the Drug List are new for the beginning of each year. However, during the year, we might make other changes that are allowed by Medicare rules.

When we make these changes to the Drug List during the year, you can still work with your doctor (or other prescriber) and ask us to make an exception to cover the drug. We will also continue to update our online Drug List as scheduled and provide other required information to reflect drug changes. (To learn more about changes we may make to the Drug List, see Chapter 5, Section 6 of the Evidence of Coverage.)

### Changes to Prescription Drug Costs

*Note:* If you are in a program that helps pay for your drugs (“Extra Help”), **the information about costs for Part D prescription drugs may not apply to you.** We sent you a separate insert, called the “Evidence of Coverage Rider for People Who Get Extra Help Paying for Prescription Drugs” (also called the “Low Income Subsidy Rider” or the “LIS Rider”), which tells you about your drug costs. If you receive “Extra Help” and haven’t received this insert by September 30, 2020, please call Customer Service and ask for the “LIS Rider.”

There are four “drug payment stages.” How much you pay for a Part D drug depends on which drug payment stage you are in. (You can look in Chapter 6, Section 2 of your *Evidence of Coverage* for more information about the stages.)

The information below shows the changes for next year to the first two stages – the Yearly Deductible Stage and the Initial Coverage Stage. (Most members do not reach the other two stages – the Coverage Gap Stage or the Catastrophic Coverage Stage. To get information about your costs in these stages, look at Chapter 6, Sections 6 and 7, in the *Evidence of Coverage*, which is located on our website at [www.EverythingEssence.com](http://www.EverythingEssence.com). You may also call Customer Service to ask us to mail you an *Evidence of Coverage*.)

### Changes to the Deductible Stage

Stage	2020 (this year)	2021 (next year)
<b>Stage 1: Yearly Deductible Stage</b>	Because we have no deductible, this payment stage does not apply to you.	Because we have no deductible, this payment stage does not apply to you.

### Changes to Your Cost Sharing in the Initial Coverage Stage

To learn how copays and coinsurance work, look at Chapter 6, Section 1.2, *Types of out-of-pocket costs you may pay for covered drugs* in your *Evidence of Coverage*.

Stage	2020 (this year)	2021 (next year)
<p><b>Stage 2: Initial Coverage Stage</b></p> <p>During this stage, the plan pays its share of the cost of your drugs and <b>you pay your share of the cost.</b></p> <p>The costs in this row are for a one-month (30-day) supply when you fill your prescription at a network pharmacy. For information about the costs for a long-term supply or for mail-order prescriptions, look in Chapter 6, Section 5 of your <i>Evidence of Coverage</i>.</p> <p>We changed the tier for some of the drugs on our Drug List. To see if your drugs will be in a different tier, look them up on the Drug List.</p>	<p>Your cost for a one-month supply at a network pharmacy:</p> <p><b>Preferred Generic:</b>  <i>Standard cost-sharing</i>            You pay \$4 per prescription.  <i>Preferred cost-sharing</i>            You pay \$0 per prescription.</p> <p><b>Generic:</b>  <i>Standard cost-sharing</i>            You pay \$12 per prescription.  <i>Preferred cost-sharing</i>            You pay \$0 per prescription.</p> <p><b>Preferred Brand:</b>  <i>Standard cost-sharing</i>            You pay \$47 per prescription.  <i>Preferred cost-sharing</i>            You pay \$39 per prescription.</p> <p><b>Non-Preferred Brand:</b>  <i>Standard cost-sharing</i>            You pay \$100 per prescription.  <i>Preferred cost-sharing</i>            You pay \$75 per prescription.</p> <p><b>Specialty Tier:</b>  <i>Standard cost-sharing</i>            You pay 33% of the total cost.  <i>Preferred cost-sharing</i>            You pay 33% of the total cost.</p>	<p>Your cost for a one-month supply at a network pharmacy:</p> <p><b>Preferred Generic:</b>  <i>Standard cost-sharing</i>            You pay \$4 per prescription.  <i>Preferred cost-sharing</i>            You pay \$0 per prescription.</p> <p><b>Generic:</b>  <i>Standard cost-sharing</i>            You pay \$12 per prescription.  <i>Preferred cost-sharing</i>            You pay \$0 per prescription.</p> <p><b>Preferred Brand:</b>  <i>Standard cost-sharing</i>            You pay \$47 per prescription.  <i>Preferred cost-sharing</i>            You pay \$39 per prescription.</p> <p><b>Non-Preferred Brand:</b>  <i>Standard cost-sharing</i>            You pay \$100 per prescription.  <i>Preferred cost-sharing</i>            You pay \$75 per prescription.</p> <p><b>Specialty Tier:</b>  <i>Standard cost-sharing</i>            You pay 33% of the total cost.  <i>Preferred cost-sharing</i>            You pay 33% of the total cost.</p>

Stage	2020 (this year)	2021 (next year)
<b>Stage 2: Initial Coverage Stage (continued)</b>	<p><b>Insulin Tier:</b>  <i>Standard cost-sharing</i>            You pay \$0 per prescription.  <i>Preferred cost-sharing</i>            You pay \$0 per prescription.</p> <hr/> <p>Once your total drug costs have reached \$4,020, you will move to the next stage (the Coverage Gap Stage).</p>	<p><b>Insulin Tier:</b>  <i>Standard cost-sharing</i>            You pay \$0 per prescription.  <i>Preferred cost-sharing</i>            You pay \$0 per prescription.</p> <hr/> <p>Once your total drug costs have reached \$4,130, you will move to the next stage (the Coverage Gap Stage).</p>

## Changes to the Coverage Gap and Catastrophic Coverage Stages

The other two drug coverage stages – the Coverage Gap Stage and the Catastrophic Coverage Stage – are for people with high drug costs. **Most members do not reach the Coverage Gap Stage or the Catastrophic Coverage Stage.** For information about your costs in these stages, look at Chapter 6, Sections 6 and 7, in your *Evidence of Coverage*.

## SECTION 2 Deciding Which Plan to Choose

### Section 2.1 – If you want to stay in Essence Advantage

**To stay in our plan you don't need to do anything.** If you do not sign up for a different plan or change to Original Medicare by December 7, you will automatically be enrolled in our Essence Advantage.

### Section 2.2 – If you want to change plans

We hope to keep you as a member next year but if you want to change for 2021 follow these steps:



### Step 1: Learn about and compare your choices

- You can join a different Medicare health plan timely,
- *OR--* You can change to Original Medicare. If you change to Original Medicare, you will need to decide whether to join a Medicare drug plan. If you do not enroll in a Medicare drug plan, please see Section 2.1 regarding a potential Part D late enrollment penalty.

To learn more about Original Medicare and the different types of Medicare plans, read *Medicare & You 2021*, call your State Health Insurance Assistance Program (see Section 4), or call Medicare (see Section 6.2).

You can also find information about plans in your area by using the Medicare Plan Finder on the Medicare website. Go to [www.medicare.gov/plan-compare](http://www.medicare.gov/plan-compare). **Here, you can find information about costs, coverage, and quality ratings for Medicare plans.**

As a reminder, Essence Healthcare, Inc offers other Medicare health plans and Medicare prescription drug plans. These other plans may differ in coverage, monthly premiums, and cost-sharing amounts.

### Step 2: Change your coverage

- To **change to a different Medicare health plan**, enroll in the new plan. You will automatically be disenrolled from Essence Advantage.
- To **change to Original Medicare with a prescription drug plan**, enroll in the new drug plan. You will automatically be disenrolled from Essence Advantage.
- To **change to Original Medicare without a prescription drug plan**, you must either:
  - Send us a written request to disenroll. Contact Customer Service if you need more information on how to do this (phone numbers are in Section 6.1 of this booklet).
  - – *or* – Contact **Medicare**, at 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227), 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and ask to be disenrolled. TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.

## SECTION 3 Deadline for Changing Plans

If you want to change to a different plan or to Original Medicare for next year, you can do it from **October 15 until December 7**. The change will take effect on January 1, 2021.

### Are there other times of the year to make a change?

In certain situations, changes are also allowed at other times of the year. For example, people with Medicaid, those who get “Extra Help” paying for their drugs, those who have or are leaving employer coverage, and those who move out of the service area may be allowed to make a change at other times of the year. For more information, see Chapter 10, Section 2.3 of the *Evidence of Coverage*.

If you enrolled in a Medicare Advantage plan for January 1, 2021, and don't like your plan choice, you can switch to another Medicare health plan (either with or without Medicare prescription drug coverage) or switch to Original Medicare (either with or without Medicare prescription drug coverage) between January 1 and March 31, 2021. For more information, see Chapter 10, Section 2.2 of the *Evidence of Coverage*.

## SECTION 4 Programs That Offer Free Counseling about Medicare

The State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) is a government program with trained counselors in every state. In Missouri, the SHIP is called Community Leaders Assisting the Insured of Missouri (CLAIM). In Illinois, the SHIP is called Senior Health Insurance Program.

A State Health Insurance Assistance Program is independent (not connected with any insurance company or health plan). It is a state program that gets money from the federal government to give **free** local health insurance counseling to people with Medicare. SHIP counselors can help you with your Medicare questions or problems. They can help you understand your Medicare plan choices and answer questions about switching plans. You can call CLAIM at 1-573-817-8320 or toll free at 1-800-390-3330 (TTY: 711). You can call Senior Health Insurance Program at 1-800-252-8966 (TTY: 1-888-206-1327). You can learn more about CLAIM by visiting their website ([www.MissouriClaim.org](http://www.MissouriClaim.org)). You can learn more about Senior Health Insurance Program by visiting their website ([www.Illinois.gov/aging/SHIP](http://www.Illinois.gov/aging/SHIP)).

## SECTION 5 Programs That Help Pay for Prescription Drugs

You may qualify for help paying for prescription drugs. Below we list different kinds of help:

- **“Extra Help” from Medicare.** People with limited incomes may qualify for “Extra Help” to pay for their prescription drug costs. If you qualify, Medicare could pay up to 75% or more of your drug costs including monthly prescription drug premiums, annual deductibles, and coinsurance. Additionally, those who qualify will not have a coverage gap or late enrollment penalty. Many people are eligible and don't even know it. To see if you qualify, call:
  - 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048, 24 hours a day/7 days a week;
  - The Social Security Office at 1-800-772-1213 between 7 am and 7 pm, Monday through Friday. TTY users should call, 1-800-325-0778 (applications); or
  - Your State Medicaid Office (applications).
- **Prescription Cost-sharing Assistance for Persons with HIV/AIDS.** The AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP) helps ensure that ADAP-eligible individuals living with HIV/AIDS have access to life-saving HIV medications. Individuals must meet certain criteria, including proof of state residence and HIV status, low income as defined by the State, and uninsured/under-insured status. Medicare Part D prescription drugs that are also covered by ADAP qualify for prescription cost-sharing assistance through the Missouri AIDS Drug Assistance Program or Illinois Department of Public Health. For

information on eligibility criteria, covered drugs, or how to enroll in the program, please call 1-573-751-6439 (TTY: 711) for MO ADAP or 1-217-782-4977 (TTY: 1-800-547-0466) for IL ADAP.

## SECTION 6 Questions?

### Section 6.1 – Getting Help from Essence Advantage

Questions? We're here to help. Please call Customer Service at 314-209-2700 or 1-866-597-9560. (TTY only, call 711). We are available for phone calls seven days a week from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. You may reach a messaging service on weekends from April 1 through September 30 and holidays. Please leave a message and your call will be returned the next business day. Calls to these numbers are free.

#### **Read your 2021 *Evidence of Coverage* (it has details about next year's benefits and costs)**

This *Annual Notice of Changes* gives you a summary of changes in your benefits and costs for 2021. For details, look in the 2021 *Evidence of Coverage* for Essence Advantage. The *Evidence of Coverage* is the legal, detailed description of your plan benefits. It explains your rights and the rules you need to follow to get covered services and prescription drugs. A copy of the *Evidence of Coverage* is located on our website at [www.EverythingEssence.com](http://www.EverythingEssence.com). You may also call Customer Service to ask us to mail you an *Evidence of Coverage*.

#### **Visit our Website**

You can also visit our website at [www.EverythingEssence.com](http://www.EverythingEssence.com). As a reminder, our website has the most up-to-date information about our provider network (Provider/Pharmacy Directory) and our list of covered drugs (Formulary/Drug List).

### Section 6.2 – Getting Help from Medicare

To get information directly from Medicare:

#### **Call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227)**

You can call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227), 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.

#### **Visit the Medicare Website**

You can visit the Medicare website ([www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov)). It has information about cost, coverage, and quality ratings to help you compare Medicare health plans. You can find information about plans available in your area by using the Medicare Plan Finder on the

Medicare website. (To view the information about plans, go to [www.medicare.gov/plan-compare](http://www.medicare.gov/plan-compare)).

### **Read *Medicare & You 2021***

You can read the *Medicare & You 2021* Handbook. Every year in the fall, this booklet is mailed to people with Medicare. It has a summary of Medicare benefits, rights and protections, and answers to the most frequently asked questions about Medicare. If you don't have a copy of this booklet, you can get it at the Medicare website ([www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov)) or by calling 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227), 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.

PO Box 5907  
Troy, MI 48007  
[www.EverythingEssence.com](http://www.EverythingEssence.com)

Local: 314-209-2700  
Toll-free: 1-866-597-9560  
TTY users dial: 711

8 a.m. to 8 p.m., seven days a week.

You may reach a messaging service on weekends from April 1 through September 30 and holidays. Please leave a message, and your call will be returned the next business day.

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

Essence Healthcare complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex.

