

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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*Nonprofit will team with Grants Pass-based OHMS in Josephine County*  
**CareOregon to offer Medicare plan in Southwest Oregon**

CareOregon, a non-profit health plan that has provided Medicaid managed care services in Jackson County since 1997, will offer Medicare coverage in Jackson and Josephine counties effective January 1, 2008. As many as 3,000 residents of the two counties are eligible for both Medicare and Medicaid.

CareOregon provides managed care services exclusively for beneficiaries of the Oregon Health Plan. In some counties, it also offers its CareOregon Advantage plan for those who are also eligible for Medicare.

“Right now these members could have as many as three different health plans, including Medicaid through the Oregon Health Plan, Medicare through a fee-for-service card, and perhaps a different plan for their Medicare prescription drug coverage,” said Patrick Curran, CareOregon’s Medicare director. “That’s very complicated and can be confusing for both members and health care providers.

“What we will do is coordinate that care,” he said.

CareOregon’s statewide membership totals more than 95,000 Medicaid members (including approximately 1,800 in Jackson County) along with more than 5,400 enrolled in CareOregon Advantage. Some 20,000 Jackson County residents qualify for Medicaid, and about 2,000 are also eligible for Medicare.

In Josephine County, CareOregon Advantage will team with Oregon Health Management Services (OHMS). OHMS is a Grants Pass-based plan serving Oregon Health Plan members in Josephine County since 1992. Members receive care at the Grants Pass Clinic, Siskiyou Community Health Center and many independent practices. Members also receive their specialty care through a network of more than 330 providers.

Though this relationship, OHMS and CareOregon Advantage look forward to providing comprehensive coverage to those who are on OHMS Oregon Health Plan and are also eligible for Medicare.

Josephine County has about 10,000 residents eligible for Medicaid. About 1,000 are also eligible for Medicare. OHMS has about 3,800 Oregon Health Plan members, of whom an estimated 400 are also eligible for Medicare.

The agreement with CareOregon Advantage makes it possible for OHMS to coordinate care locally for Medicaid, Medicare, and Medicaid drug benefits through the members' current doctors and pharmacists, said Roylene Chandler, OHMS executive director.

Local member services representatives will continue to assist OHMS members, Chandler said. And the partnership gives members the additional benefit of CareOregon's experience in care management for complex and chronic medical conditions.

CareOregon's CareSupport Unit—teams of nurses, behavioral health specialists, and Health Care Guides—gives support that complements physicians' treatment plans for patients with complex or chronic conditions. This support can range from education and self-care coaching to making contact with community organizations that supply food, clothing and shelter.

OHMS chose CareOregon Advantage as a partner because of CareOregon's CareSupport program, Chandler said, and because both organizations are focused on serving low-income Oregonians while providing quality care with integrity and respect. Neither offers commercial health insurance.

"We're dedicated to providing health care access for Oregonians who are most at risk," Curran said. "We're glad to be able to team with OHMS and the providers in Southwest Oregon who share that mission."

**For more information, contact:**

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**About OHMS**

Oregon Health Management Services (OHMS) is a Josephine County-based managed care organization owned and governed by local physicians. Its goal is to positively impact the health of our local community through the Oregon Health Plan, outreach to adolescents and the homeless, counseling services and more.

For more information about OHMS, visit [www.ohmsoregon.com](http://www.ohmsoregon.com)

**About CareOregon**

CareOregon is committed to improving and protecting the health of low income and vulnerable Oregonians. The not-for-profit organization is dedicated to providing access to high quality, cost-effective, culturally competent care for members and supporting the providers who care for them.

For more information about CareOregon, visit [www.careoregon.org](http://www.careoregon.org).

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