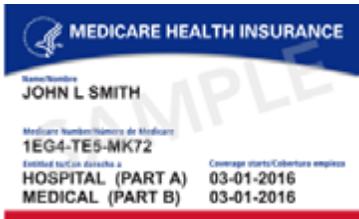


Welcome to *The Pulse*, from Greater Tri Cities IPA Medical Group. This is your quarterly check-up for health tips, facts, and all you need to know from your local North County Medical Group.

## Watch for New Medicare ID Cards



The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) is removing Social Security Numbers (SSNs) from all Medicare cards by April 2019. SSNs will be replaced by new unique Medicare numbers. This change is to prevent fraud, fight identity theft, and keep taxpayer dollars safe. Notifications begin April 1st, 2018.

CMS is mailing new Medicare cards to all people with Medicare over the next year by geographic location. According to [cms.gov](http://cms.gov), California residents will receive new cards between April 2018 and June 2018. To check the status of card mailings, visit [Medicare.gov](http://Medicare.gov).

A new card will come to you automatically as long as your address is up to date. You can update your address via the social security office. Upon receiving your new card, be sure to shred your old Medicare card as it contains your SSN. Your benefits and coverage will remain the same, and you will not need to notify your Medicare Advantage Health Plan or doctor. They will receive the updated information from CMS. Your Medicare Advantage Plan ID is still your main card, but carry your new Medicare card as well.

## CAHPS Surveys

You may receive a survey in the mail about your doctor some time between March and June. This is known as the Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS) Survey. The survey is administered to a random selection (selected by CMS) of members who have been enrolled with the health plan for at least six months. It asks consumers and patients to report on and evaluate their health care experiences. Your feedback is so important and greatly appreciated. Please take the time to complete and submit the survey. The survey provides insight to the patient experience, and understanding the patient experience is a key step in moving towards patient-centered care.

- Heather Rotan  
Clinical Initiatives Manager

## Handling High Prescription Costs

Do you need help paying for medications? Many individuals may qualify for Extra Help through Low Income Subsidy (LIS.) Now is a good time to see if you qualify for Extra Help on prescription costs.

LIS allows you to make changes during the Medicare lock out period. It is considered a Special Election. Here are a few examples of other special elections:

- Leaving a retirement/company insurance program
- Moving to San Diego county from another county
- Turning 65

If you are confused about Medicare, learn more. Call to get a schedule of our upcoming meetings.

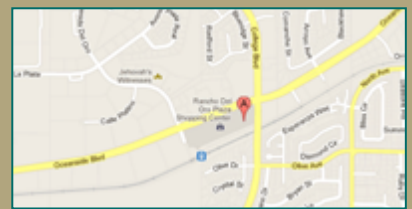
-Jack & Annette Midland,  
J&A Insurance Services  
(760) 504-9740/(760) 504-9748.



## Quick Fix

Greater Tri Cities IPA  
Customer Service  
available 9 AM to 5 PM  
Monday thru Friday:  
(760) 732-0272 (TTY/TDD 711)

Urgent Care is available 8 AM  
- 8 PM Monday thru Sunday at  
828 Urgent Care:

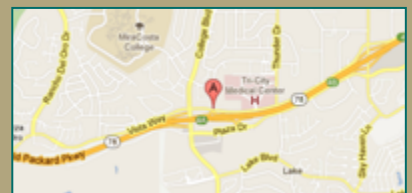


4171 Oceanside Blvd. #109  
Oceanside, CA 92056  
(760) 216-6253

Call your Primary Care  
Physician whenever possible  
before seeking Urgent Care.

Lab Work can be handled at  
any LabCorp location.  
[www.labcorp.com](http://www.labcorp.com)

Tri-City Medical Center is our  
primary hospital serving the  
community since 1961:



4002 Vista Way  
Oceanside, CA 92056  
(760) 724-8411

## Upcoming Events & Classes

Everything listed in this section is offered free of charge. For more information about events, dates, or times call 760-732-0272 (TTY/TDD 711).

### Diabetes Education

Pre-Diabetes Education  
Diabetes Support Group  
Diabetes Class Series

Advanced Diabetes Supply Warehouse  
2544 Campbell Pl., Ste 155, Carlsbad 92009

### Blue Shield of California Intro to Medicare

Friday, April 13th at 2:00PM

Coco's Restuarant  
605 W. Vista Way, Vista, 92083

A salesperson will be present with materials.  
Blue Shield is one plan that GTCIPA accepts.

## Flu Activity Update from the CDC

According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC) at [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov), "While influenza activity continued to decrease in the latest FluView report, it remains high across much of the United States." The current data indicates that the flu season peaked in early February during what the CDC categorizes as week 5. They are now observing a decline but expect flu activity to remain elevated for several more weeks. The CDC recommends influenza vaccinations for all persons 6 months of age and older as long as flu viruses are circulating. Furthermore, they note the highest hospitalization rate has been among people 65 years and older. If you have not yet received your flu shot, talk to your doctor about where to get one that will be covered at little or no cost to you.

## Maintain Access to your Primary Care Physician.

### Select any of the following health plans:

Aetna.....	(800) 872-3862 (TTY/TDD 711).....	<a href="http://www.aetna.com">www.aetna.com</a>
Anthem Blue Cross.....	(855) 306-4537 (TTY/TDD 711).....	<a href="http://www.anthem.com/ca/shop">www.anthem.com/ca/shop</a>
Blue Shield.....	(800) 393-6130 (TTY/TDD 711).....	<a href="http://www.blueshieldca.com">www.blueshieldca.com</a>
Care1st Health Plan.....	(800) 544-0088 (TTY/TDD 711).....	<a href="http://www.care1st.com">www.care1st.com</a>
Health Net.....	(800) 949-3022 (TTY/TDD 711).....	<a href="http://www.healthnetadvantage.com">www.healthnetadvantage.com</a>
Humana.....	(800) 992-2551 (TTY/TDD 711).....	<a href="http://www.humana-medicare.com">www.humana-medicare.com</a>
United Healthcare.....	(800) 577-5623 (TTY/TDD 711).....	<a href="http://www.uhcmedicareolutions.com">www.uhcmedicareolutions.com</a>