

# The Greer Citizen

March 10, 2010, pg. C2

## TO YOUR HEALTH

### **CHRONIC ILLNESS PUSHES MEDICARE SPENDING UP**

The staggering rise in Medicare spending over the past two decades has been caused by treating seniors with chronic conditions, says a recent study appearing in the leading health policy journal "Health Affairs".

Millions of Medicare beneficiaries with chronic illness could benefit from customized care coordination offered through Medicare Special Needs Plans (SNPs), and absent from fee-for-service Medicare.

The study suggested that care coordination, evidence-based community prevention and support for patient self-management are the cornerstones for successful treatment of seniors with chronic illnesses.

Care Improvement Plus, South Carolina's largest SNP, encouraged state Medicare beneficiaries with chronic illnesses to find out if they're eligible for assistance under these coordinated care plans. They also called on Congress to consider the issues of coordinated care and chronic disease management for those on Medicare with chronic illnesses as they debate health reform.