



MEDICARE NEWS

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Top Ten Ways Consumers Can Help Fight Medicare Fraud

Medicare beneficiaries are the first line of defense against Medicare fraud and abuse.

Following are the top ten ways you can protect yourself, your loved ones and Medicare from fraud, guard your benefits and ensure Medicare's ability to serve future generations.

1. When you have doctor's appointments or receive health care services, record the dates on a calendar, note the tests and services you receive, and save the receipts and statements you get from your providers. To assist with this, you may obtain a free Personal Health Care Journal from your local Senior Medicare Patrol program. To locate the Senior Medicare Patrol program in your state, call 1-877-808-2468 or go to the program locator at www.smpresource.org.
2. When you review your Medicare claims, compare the services and items listed with the items you have recorded in your calendar or journal to make sure you received each service listed and that all the details are correct. If you find items listed in your claims that you do not have a record of, it's possible that you or Medicare may have been billed for services or items you did not get.
3. You may review your Original Medicare claims, once they have been processed, by visiting www.MyMedicare.gov or calling 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227, TTY 1-877-486-2048) and using the automated phone system. If you are in a Medicare Advantage Plan (HMO or PPO) or Medicare Prescription Drug Plan, you may call your plan for more information about a claim.

4. You may request the assistance of your local Senior Medicare Patrol program in reviewing your Medicare claims statement. If you identify errors or suspect fraud, the Senior Medicare Patrol can also help you make a report to Medicare.
5. Recognize potential sources of fraud, including unrecognized claims on your Medicare bill, and suspicious advertisements from companies offering Medicare covered items or services, which may not be legitimate.
6. Do not use another person's Medicare card, and don't allow anyone else to use your Medicare card to access benefits or for any other reason.
7. Protect your Medicare Number. Do not give it out, except to your doctor or other Medicare providers. Never give your Medicare number in exchange for a special offer.
8. Report suspected instances of fraud by calling 1-800-MEDICARE. When using the automated telephone system, have your Medicare card with you and clearly speak or enter your Medicare number and letters. At the main menu, say "Claims" or "Billing" and then follow the menu prompts.
9. Consider becoming a member of the Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) so that you may assist other beneficiaries and their caregivers to identify and report suspected fraud and abuse. To locate the SMP program in your state, call 1-877-808-2468 or go to the SMP locator at www.smpresource.org.
10. To learn more about Medicare fraud and ways to protect against it, visit www.stopmedicarefraud.gov. More information about CMS fraud prevention efforts is available at www.cms.gov/Partnerships/04_FraudPreventionToolkit.asp.

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