



CMS is Fighting Fraud and Abuse

You Can Help

Health care fraud drives up costs for everyone in the health care system. The Obama Administration has made the elimination of fraud, waste, and abuse, particularly in health care, a top priority.

Over the last three years, the administration has recovered over \$14.9 billion in fraud, some of which resulted from fraud reporting by individuals – a proven tool in helping the government detect fraud, waste and abuse in the Medicare program. In April of this year, CMS **announced a proposed rule** that would increase rewards—up to \$9.9 million—paid to Medicare beneficiaries and others whose tips about suspected fraud lead to the successful recovery of funds. If you have questions about claims submitted on your behalf, call 1-800-HHS-TIPS or 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). TTY users can call 1-877-486-2048.

The Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) is also expanding thanks to new funding offered by the Administration on Community Living. The SMP is a national, volunteer-based program that empowers people with Medicare to prevent and report Medicare fraud, waste, and abuse. Since 1997, more than 3.5 million people have learned how to recognize and fight fraud and abuse, and more than 7,000 referrals have been made to CMS and the Office of Inspector General for investigation. To learn more about your local SMP, visit the SMP locator tool at www.smpresource.org, or call 1-877-808-2468.

The Affordable Care Act has provided new authorities and resources for the CMS to expand efforts to prevent and fight fraud, waste and abuse. CMS has created a rigorous screening process for providers and suppliers enrolling in Medicare to keep fraudulent providers out of the program, and is stopping payments to providers and suppliers if there is a credible allegation of fraud.

All of this is helping CMS move beyond “pay and chase” to a prevention model that will help stop fraud and abuse before payment is made. In addition, CMS is now using innovative predictive modeling technology similar to that used by credit card companies. In its first year of operation, this new technology stopped, prevented, or identified an estimated \$115 million in fraudulent Medicare payments.

As important as these new initiatives are, the first and best line of defense against fraud is you – the health care consumer. CMS is also making it easier for seniors to join in the fight against fraud. In mailboxes across the country, people with Medicare will soon see a redesigned statement of their claims for services and benefits that will help them better spot potential fraud, waste and abuse. The redesigned notice will make it easier for people with Medicare to understand their benefits, file an appeal if a claim is denied, and spot claims for services they never received. The redesigned Medicare Summary Notices is already available online.

INFORMATION PARTNERS SHOULD KNOW

So here are four key ways to protect your Medicare benefits:

- **Record doctor appointments in your calendar.** Use a calendar or personal journal to record all of your doctor appointments and tests. Note the dates of doctor appointments, and save the receipts and statements from your providers. By using different mobile device apps, you can keep records on your smartphone or computer tablet to help manage your appointments and personal health information.
- **Review claims submitted on your behalf.** Look out for suspicious activities. Review your Medicare statement to make sure Medicare wasn't billed for something you didn't get. If you have Original Medicare, check the Medicare Summary Notice you got in the mail, or you can download the Blue Button at www.mymedicare.gov and monitor your health information online or on your mobile device. Be wary of salespeople who knock on your door or call you uninvited and try to sell you a product or service. Never let anyone give you "free" equipment or supplies in exchange for your Medicare number.
- **Report suspected cases of fraud.** If you think someone has misused your Medicare number, call 1-800-MEDICARE. If you suspect identity theft, or feel like you gave your personal information to someone you shouldn't have, call the Federal Trade Commission's ID Theft Hotline at 1-877-438-4338.
- **Remember to guard your Medicare number.** Fraud schemes often depend on crooks first getting hold of people's Medicare numbers. So treat yours as you would a credit card. Don't share it with anyone except your doctor or other Medicare-approved health care provider and don't allow anyone else to use it.

To learn more about health care fraud and ways to protect against it, visit www.stopmedicarefraud.gov. To contact your local Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) project, visit www.smpresource.org. More information about CMS fraud prevention efforts is available at www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Outreach/Partnerships/FraudPreventionToolkit.html.



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