



SMP
Senior Medicare Patrol

Preventing Medicare Fraud

'Care Share

Protect Your Medicare: How to Spot and Stop Fraud Before It Costs You

Medicare Fraud Trends and the Importance of Reviewing Your Medicare Summary Notice

Medicare fraud costs taxpayers billions annually, with schemes ranging from billing for unprovided services to overcharging for medical equipment. Fraudsters constantly adapt, making it crucial for beneficiaries to stay vigilant. One of the best defenses is reviewing the Medicare Summary Notice (MSN) and reporting discrepancies to the Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP).

Current Trends in Medicare Fraud

Common fraud schemes include:

1. **Billing for Unnecessary or Unprovided Services** – Some providers charge for services never performed or exaggerate conditions for higher payouts.
2. **Durable Medical Equipment (DME) Fraud** – This type of fraud has been increasing, with scammers billing Medicare for expensive medical devices that beneficiaries never receive or do not need. This is particularly common with power wheelchairs, orthotic braces, and back supports.

3. **Genetic Testing Scams** – Some fraudulent providers pressure seniors into taking unnecessary genetic tests, claiming they can detect diseases early. Medicare typically does not cover these tests unless they are medically necessary. Fraudsters use these tests to obtain personal Medicare information and submit false claims.
4. **Home Healthcare and Hospice Fraud** – Enrolling patients in services they don't qualify for to overbill Medicare.
5. **COVID-19 and Telemedicine Fraud** – Fake telehealth services and pandemic-related scams continue to exploit seniors.

Sample of items showing up on **Montanan's** Medicare Summary Notices.

Alginate or other fiber gelling dressing, wound cover, sterile, pad size more than 16sq. in. but le (A6197-A4) \$2,760 each.

1 supply allowance for non-adjunctive, non-implanted continuous glucose monitor or receiver, (E2103-KFNUKXCG or A4239-KFKXCG) \$241-\$337 each.

40 Ostomy pouch, drainable, with extended

wear barrier attached, with built in convexity, with filter, (A5057) \$600 each.

300 Intermittent urinary catheter, with insertion supplies (A4353-KX) \$2,940 each.

If you see anything like this or otherwise not ordered by your doctor, report it today.

Why Reviewing Your Medicare Summary Notice is Crucial

The MSN, mailed every three months, lists services billed to Medicare. Key details to check:

- **Service dates and descriptions** – Ensure services were received as listed.
- **Provider name** – Verify the listed provider was actually visited.
- **Charges and payments** – Confirm Medicare paid the correct amount.

How to Report Suspicious Activity to SMP

The Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) is a nationwide program designed to educate and empower Medicare beneficiaries in detecting and reporting fraud. If you notice any suspicious activity on your MSN, you should:

1. **Contact the provider** – Errors may be unintentional.
2. **Report to Medicare** – Call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227).

3. **Reach out to SMP** – They assist in investigating and resolving fraud cases.

Medicare fraud is a serious issue that affects not only beneficiaries but also taxpayers and the healthcare system as a whole. By staying informed about the latest fraud trends and carefully reviewing the Medicare Summary Notice, beneficiaries can help prevent fraudulent billing.

Reporting suspicious activities to the Senior Medicare Patrol ensures that Medicare funds are used properly and that dishonest providers are held accountable. Staying vigilant and proactive is the best defense against Medicare fraud.

Montana SMP is located across the state to help in your community. Simply call 1-800-551-3191.

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) – Provides official information on Medicare policies, fraud prevention tips, and the Medicare Summary Notice (MSN). www.medicare.gov

Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) – A national program that helps educate Medicare beneficiaries about fraud and assists in reporting suspicious activities. www.smpresource.org

Office of Inspector General (OIG) – U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (HHS) – Investigates healthcare fraud, waste, and abuse, and provides updates on enforcement actions. oig.hhs.gov

Federal Trade Commission (FTC) – Offers consumer protection resources and fraud alerts related to healthcare scams. www.ftc.gov

Department of Justice (DOJ) – Healthcare Fraud Unit – Reports on Medicare fraud cases, legal actions, and enforcement measures. www.justice.gov/criminal-fraud/health-care-fraud-unit

The Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) is ready to provide you with the information you need to PROTECT yourself from Medicare fraud, errors, and abuse; DETECT potential fraud, errors, and abuse; and REPORT your concerns. SMPs help educate and empower Medicare beneficiaries in the fight against health care fraud. Your SMP can help you with your questions, concerns, or complaints about potential fraud and abuse issues. It also provides information and educational presentations. To reach Montana Senior Medicare Patrol, call 1-800-551-3191 or visit www.smpresource.org.