



# SMP

Senior Medicare Patrol

Preventing Medicare Fraud

# 'Care Share

Medicare Fraud Threatens Your  
Wallet: How You Can Help Stop It

## Hello, Medicare Beneficiaries!

Earlier this year, every Medicare beneficiary in the country almost paid an extra \$11 a month this year. Not because of inflation. Not because of new benefits. Because of fraud.

When someone bills Medicare for care you never got, you end up paying for it through your premium. Fraud doesn't stay trapped in a government office. It lands right in your mailbox as a higher bill.

## Behind the Scheme: Billion-Dollar Wound Care Scams

- **Extreme Markups:** In June 2026, federal investigators uncovered a nationwide scheme where companies bought basic wound care products, relabeled them, and charged Medicare up to \$1,450 per square centimeter, a 2,000% markup.

- **Billion-Dollar Billing:** Scammers billed Medicare over \$4 billion for these products between 2021 and 2024, often applying them to patients who didn't need them and without talking to their doctor.
- **A Price Spike Prevented:** Medicare caught the pattern and cut the payment rate before it went further. If they hadn't, that single scheme would have forced an \$11/month Part B premium hike on every person on Medicare.

## The Good News: You can Help Stop It

You don't need to be a medical billing expert to stop fraud. You just need to glance at the statements Medicare already sends you.

- **Original Medicare:** Check your Medicare Summary Notice (MSN), sent every 6 months.
- **Medicare Advantage:** Check your Explanation of Benefits (EOB), sent monthly.



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## Three Minutes, Four Things to Look For

Go through your MSN or EOB and check for:

1. **Services you don't remember.** A test, visit, or item billed that you never had.
2. **Duplicate charges.** The same service billed twice.
3. **Wrong provider or date.** A visit listed with a doctor you've never seen, or on a day you weren't there.
4. **Equipment you never ordered.** Braces, wound care supplies, and genetic testing kits show up often in fraud cases.

## If Something Looks Wrong

Reach out to these free, confidential resources:

- **Montana Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP):** Call **1-800-551-3191** to get local help reviewing statements, bills, and reporting fraud.
- **1-800-MEDICARE:** Call **1-800-633-4227** (TTY: 1-877-486-2048) anytime to report lost cards, check claim statuses, or asked about suspicious activity.

## Take Action Today

- **Review your next notice:** Set aside three minutes to check your next MSN or EOB line by line when it arrives.
- **Share this newsletter:** Pass this along to three friends to spread awareness and protect our community.

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](http://www.smpresource.org).