



'Care Share

Open Enrollment for Fraud, Waste and Abuse

October 15th through December 7th isn't only open enrollment for people on Medicare Part D, it is open enrollment season for crooks as well! You may say it is always open enrollment for scams, however they are significantly higher leading up to and around the annual Open Enrollment Period for Medicare Part D.

During this window, the scammers and crooks can expect to capitalize on the confusion and mass of information that is swirling around. People may have just switched plans and are more apt to fall for the unidentified caller who uses all the skills and tactics of a con artist to talk them out of personal information. It's happened in Montana, and it's happened in Missoula.

In the coming weeks, be extra careful not to share your personal health information, including your Medicare number, with anyone that is not a part of your healthcare team. Last year we heard reports where calls were received telling people Medicare was replacing the cards. Medicare will never call you, they are not replacing your cards, and they would certainly never charge you if they were.

There will be a time in the upcoming years whereby you will receive a new Medicare number. At this time we don't know what the process will look like, but you can be sure it will involve official announcements and letters from Social Security.

Until then, use caller ID and voicemail, and if anyone is pressuring you for information over the phone please get their information and hang up, then call us to check it out.

Open Enrollment Tip

Stop. Before you share any information over the phone, call Medicare (1-800-MEDICARE), do some research, and check with someone you trust.

National Headlines

Click on the links for more information. These are great stories to share.

Stone Co. Hospital, managers accused of Medicare fraud

Hattiesburg American

JACKSON — The U.S. Attorney's Office has filed a lawsuit that accuses Stone County Hospital and its management company of committing millions of ...

Whistleblowers — and Taxpayers — Win Lawsuit over Medicare Fraud

JD Supra (press release)

A chain of hospices agreed to settle a lawsuit over its overbilling of **Medicare**, and driving up payments by providing care to patients for whom it wasn't ...

Police strikeforce to investigate Medicare rebate scam

Sydney Morning Herald

A police strikeforce has been established to investigate a **scam** in which rebates to **Medicare** customers have been diverted to **fraudulent** bank ...

The Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) helps to educate Medicare beneficiaries about ways to prevent, detect, and combat Medicare fraud. For more information about Medicare fraud, visit the Stop Medicare Fraud website at www.stopmedicarefraud.gov.

LOOKING OUT FOR YOU

During Open Enrollment (October 15-December 7) know what to look for and how to protect yourself from becoming a victim of fraud.

Look out for the following schemes to steal your identity and your money:

- ✓ A person claiming to be from Medicare, your health plan, or another organization says they want to send you a new ID card and need your number for confirmation.
- ✓ Someone calls about a refund from last year's premiums or your drug plan costs. To get the refund they need your Medicare or Social Security number.
- ✓ A person tries to get you to sign up for a plan that you don't need, isn't right for you, or doesn't even exist – just to collect money from you.

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO:

1. PROTECT YOUR MEDICARE ID NUMBER AND OTHER PERSONAL INFORMATION

- ✓ Medicare or your current health plan will NOT call you to confirm your ID number or your health plan number.
- ✓ If you get a call, especially from a number you do not recognize or anyone requesting personal information, hang up immediately.
- ✓ Phone calls offering free medical supplies are often trying to steal your information.
- ✓ Don't fall for someone telling you they can bill Medicare for something normally not covered, or they offer you something in return for your Medicare number.

2. REPORT FRAUD

- ✓ If someone scammed you or tried to scam you, report it to Senior Medicare Patrol (Montana SMP) at 728-7682 or 800-551-3191.

3. GET HELP TO MAKE THE RIGHT CHOICE

- ✓ For free Medicare counseling, call the State Health Insurance Assistance Program (Montana SHIP) at (800) 551-3191

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