

# Money and resources are being lost to fraud and abuse



## Things to watch for on your Medicare Summary Notice (MSN) or health care billing statement

Possible Fraud and Abuse	Protect Yourself
*Someone else uses your Medicare or Medicaid number to receive medical services	*Keep a record of all your health care visits and services
*Billed for more services than you received	*Protect your Medicare and Medicaid numbers like your credit card
*Billed for services or supplies that were not medically necessary	*Never give personal information to people who email, call or show up at your door
*A company approaches you with free supplies and services, but only if you see their doctor	*Review your Medicare Summary Notice which lists services billed to Medicare during prior 3 month period
*A medical equipment company refuses to pick up items and continues to bill Medicare after your prescription has run out	*Never accept medical supplies or equipment from a door-to-door salesperson or telemarketer
*A company uses false information to convince you to join a plan	*Say <b>NO</b> to anyone who starts off saying "Congratulations you have won..." and then asks for money
*You do not receive the services your plan promised to give you	*Say <b>NO</b> to anyone asking for your Medicare number in exchange for something "free"
*You wait a couple of months for services or durable medical equipment	*Appeal decisions by your insurance company if denied care that you feel you need
*Charges unrelated to your condition or treatment	*Charges for services that you did not receive
*Charges for dates that you did not see a provider	*Billing for the same thing twice
*Billing for services or supplies not ordered by your doctor	

**If you suspect fraudulent MEDICARE activity, call  
Alaska's Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) at the Medicare Information Office 1-800-478-6065**

## Medicare fraud top in list of ten top senior scams

The National Council on Aging lists Medicare Fraud as the number one scam targeting seniors, calling health care fraud “the crime of the 21st Century.”

Medicare and other health insurance fraud is common because victims are easily found and plentiful. Almost everyone in the U.S. older than 65 has Medicare.

“Medicare beneficiaries are on the receiving end of telemarketing calls, mail and door-to-door pitches,” “Some of what they offer can be unsuitable for our seniors.”

Scammers may pose as a Medicare representative, or they will solicit older people to purchase home health services or equipment. They offer questionable insurance policies. Equipment suppliers charge Medicare for items like diabetes test strips in amounts lasting several lifetimes.

“These pseudo agencies use scare tactics to trick people into giving over personal information. We caution seniors: don’t communicate with strangers. Medicare already has your I.D. number. They don’t call up and ask for it,”

Medicare loses an estimated \$60 billion a year nationally to health care swindlers. The federal agency Health and Human Services took this taxpayer drain seriously. They formed a group called the Senior Medicare Patrol, a team of volunteers and paid professionals who warn older people about Medicare fraud. SMP specialists talk to senior groups and counsel those who suspect fraud or have billing questions.

Beneficiaries are warned to:

- proceed cautiously if salespeople claim that equipment or services are free;
  - review their Medicare Summary Notices for billing errors;
  - avoid agreeing to medical goods including diabetes testing supplies from telemarketers;
  - get a second opinion if insurance agents try to switch your supplemental policy;
  - keep good records on medical procedures and compare those records to their Medicare Summary Notices
  - contact the Alaska Senior Medicare Patrol at 1-800-478-6065 with questions or concerns.
-