Emergency Preparedness for All

Senior Medicare Patrol
June 24, 2021
www.cahealthadvocates.org

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California Health Advocates

www.cahealthadvocates.org

• **Policy** – Conduct public policy research to support recommendations for improving rights and protections for Medicare beneficiaries and their families

• **Training** – Provide timely and high-quality information on Medicare through our website, fact sheets, policy briefs and educational workshops

• **Advocacy** – Bring the experiences of Medicare beneficiaries to the public, and especially legislators and their staff at federal and state levels

• **Senior Medicare Patrol** – fraud prevention education throughout California
The mission of the SMP program is to empower and assist Medicare beneficiaries, their families, and caregivers to prevent, detect, and report health care fraud, errors, and abuse through outreach, counseling, and education.

Located in all 50 states plus:
- District of Columbia
- Guam
- Puerto Rico
- U.S. Virgin Islands

To Find your state SMP:
- Toll Free: 877-808-2468
- Visit: www.smpresource.org
Responded to a TV ad to get information about hearing aids and vision.

- Switched into MA plan without consent
- Lost access to PCP and specialists

Agreed to enroll because the agent said they could keep their doctors and specialists.

- Not true
- Facing out-of-network bills and/or cancelled medical appointments

“Medicare” called offering more benefits, gave out Medicare number.

- Thought benefits were added to current coverage
- Lost access to PCP and is facing bills
No terminal illness required. We could help with the following:

**Medicare now covers:** cooking & cleaning services

**Age:** You’re old enough to qualify for hospice.

**COVID:** nurse visits at home, free hand sanitizer, gloves, and masks

**Additional benefits:**
- DME, shakes, bus coupons

**$:**
- You can earn $400/month if you agree to enroll into our program.
Hospice Fraud Harms Beneficiaries

- Prescriptions placed on hold
- No access to specialists
- Medical visits cancelled
- Surgeries postponed
- Medicare stops paying for claims
- Beneficiaries left with expensive medical bills
Billing Complaints

• “My provider is billing me, but MSN shows I have a zero-patient responsibility.”

• Beneficiary's son reports: “The facility where my dad resides was on COVID-lockdown on the dates of services that the provider claims she provided monthly earwax removal. There is no way he received these services.”

• “I saw the neurologist twice, but my MSN shows additional visits that did not occur and added charges on the visits I did have. How can I correct this?”
Brace Complaints

• “I called the # on the TV commercial, but now I’m getting more braces than what I wanted.”

• “Medicare called me saying my doctor ordered a brace for me. I gave caller all my information. Is this legitimate?”

• “My MSN shows charges for braces by a company out-of-state. I don’t know the referring physician listed.”
COVID Complaints

- Fake vaccination offers via phone, text or email.
- Bogus sites set-up and charging for the vaccine.

Be on the Lookout for COVID-19 Survey Scams

- Legitimate surveys won't offer money, gifts, or any incentive to take them.
- Legitimate surveys won't include urgency such as "You must take this survey in the next hour or it will expire."
- Check links by hovering over them. If they seem long and suspicious, don't click them.
- Check logos, language, and phone numbers. If anything seems "doctored" or doesn't match what you see on a legitimate vaccine provider site, don't click any provided links.

Contact the SMP to report Medicare fraud, errors, or abuse at 877.808.2468 or at smpresource.org.

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Genetic Testing

- Cold calls offering free genetic testing to screen for cancer
- Promise to send you a free DNA testing kit
- Ask for Medicare #
• COVID 19 Scams Warning Door hangers
• Health Care Trackers w/pages for appt. details, notes & important phone numbers (2 sizes to choose from)
• COVID 19 Vaccine Scams Flyers with Spanish on backside
SMP webinar schedule
Open to the Public - www.cahealthadvocates.org

• July 22 at 10a-11:30a Pacific
  Elder Abuse in the Age of COVID-19
  Kerry Burnright

• August 4 at 11a-12:30p Pacific
  Health Equity and Low-Income Assistance for Medicare Beneficiaries
  Center for Medicare Advocacy

• August 26 at 10a-11:30a Pacific
  Medicare Marketing Basics and 2021 Updates
  Justice in Aging

• October 6 at 11a-12:30p Pacific
  Spotlight on the Medicare Savings Programs
  Center for Medicare Advocacy

To receive webinar invitations, email:
jsuo@cahealthadvocates.org
Services Offered

✓ Presentations
✓ Fraud Alerts, e-Newsletter
✓ Billing Research
✓ Fraudulent billing referred for investigation