



Unfortunately, Medicare Fraud Is Always in Season

By Ingrid Kunding, SMP Project Manager

If you keep track of things by season, spring has sprung! Really, it's there, even if it is still covered in snow. If you keep track of things by sports season, baseball season is here.

One season that seems to be a year-long season, however, is Medicare scam season. Winter, spring, summer, and fall. Football season, basketball season, baseball season. Medicare scams are, unfortunately, always in season. We can never be too careful.

Here are a few important reminders to help keep you and your Medicare information safe:

- Do not share your Medicare number over the phone with people who call you out of the blue, regardless of what it is they tell you or offer you. If it sounds too good to be true, it usually is!
- There is NOT a new Medicare card, so don't let the fraudsters who call convince you otherwise. The paper red, white, and blue Medicare card is the only card issued by Medicare. There is not a plastic card, a card with a chip reader, a card that requires your physician's name, or a card with other colors. There are NO NEW Medicare cards.
- Take the time to review your statements, either Medicare Summary Notices or Explanation of Benefits, to make sure that all claims filed with your information are accurate.
- Remember that the Wisconsin Senior Medicare Patrol is a phone call away if you have any questions or concerns. In Wisconsin we can be reached at (888) 818-2611.

Reporting your concerns to us makes a difference! Recently, a CEO of a healthcare company in North Carolina was sentenced to 80 months in prison for her role in fraudulently billing Medicare over \$50 million in durable medical equipment between 2014 and 2021. Of this amount billed, Medicare paid more than \$17 million.

What is the Wisconsin connection? A Medicare beneficiary in Wisconsin called our toll-free helpline with concerns about claims that were submitted to Medicare by one of the companies involved in this case. Our team worked



with the beneficiary to get copies of the documentation to submit to the Office of Inspector General for possible investigation. And in this case, there was an investigation, and this CEO will be spending some time in prison for healthcare fraud.

All reports matter! Please don't hesitate to contact us if you think something is suspicious with your Medicare

statements. We are here to help!

Here's how you can reach us:

Call: (888) 818-2611

E-mail: smp-wi@gwaar.org

Website: www.smpwi.org

Facebook: @WisconsinSeniorMedicarePatrol

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