



# The Places We've Been, The Places We'll Go

By Molly A. Kelly, SMP Volunteer Coordinator Volunteer Corner

*"He said he was a representative with Medicare and that my benefits would be cut off if I didn't cooperate with his requests. I need healthcare, so I gave him my information."*

**-Victim of a phone scam**

## **SMP hears stories like this every day**

People who receive calls or emails from scammers claiming to be with Medicare, Social Security, IRS, or the Police. And under normal circumstances we could spot a scam. However, the fraudsters are professional and use language that appears legitimate and authentic. And the critical strategy is that they threaten you. They use fear of having your healthcare cut off, halting your SS checks, or being arrested. Most of us have heard stories of people losing their life savings, having their identity stolen, or fearing arrest. We are aware of the heartbreaking results from those who have been scammed. The impact on their lives can be significant.

## **SMP can help**

Our mission is to inform and educate Medicare beneficiaries on how to protect themselves from fraud, how to detect it, and how to report it. We do this through outreach by attending events around the state, such as Health Fairs, Resource Expos, and conferences. We also give presentations to small and large groups. Knowledge and awareness are important to battle the prevalence of scammers around the country.

## **Outreach is important**

We value the opportunity to attend community events and to share the message of how to prevent, detect, and report fraud. Please let us know if there is an opportunity to come to your neck of the woods!

## **Volunteers are key**

They are key in accomplishing our goal. They are in the communities connecting directly with Medicare beneficiaries. The volunteer team staffs informational tables handing out materials, relaying key messages, and answering questions. They also give presentations of varying length to varying sized groups.

## **You can fight fraud, too!**

We invite you to join our SMP Volunteer Team. To get in touch, or to learn more, please call (888) 818-2611 or go online to Become A Volunteer - Wisconsin Senior Medicare Patrol ([smpwi.org](http://smpwi.org))



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