

PROBLEM:

Did you know that Medicare fraud costs all of us billions of dollars every year?

RESULT:

It can cost you higher Medicare premiums, deductibles, and co-payments. Losses due to fraud may also prevent Medicare and your healthcare service provider from offering more services and better coverage.

PROBLEM:

Who have you given your Medicare or health insurance number to?

RESULT:

Someone can use your number for services and supplies:

- You didn't need or want
- Your doctor did not order
- You will never use
- You did not receive

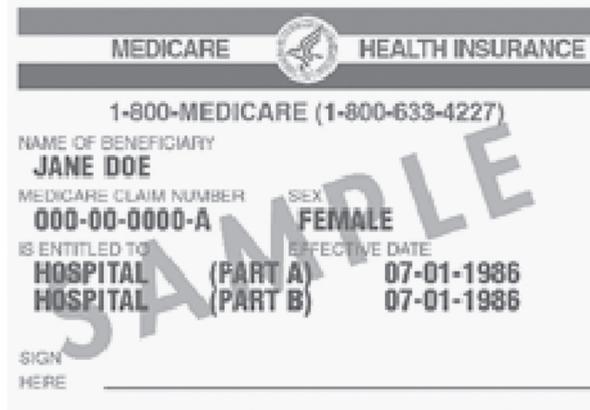
Be aware! Be cautious when someone requests your Medicare number!

FRAUD IS A CRIME

Watch out if:

- Someone offers you gifts or money to receive medical services or supplies.
- Someone offers you free testing or screening in exchange for your Medicare number.
- Your provider bills you for services or supplies you did not receive or order.
- Your provider performs services that exceed what is medically necessary.

Treat your Medicare and health insurance card like a credit card. Protect it. Do not give it out.



Do you suspect fraud?

In Washington state, call the Insurance Consumer Hotline at: 1-800-562-6900.



The Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors (SHIBA) program is a free, unbiased service of the:





Ask Grandma Rosa

Dear Grandma Rosa,
A nice man came by and said I could receive free milk and bread with Medicare. I gave him my Medicare number and now I don't feel good about it. What should I do?
- Theresa

*Dear Theresa,
Medicare does not give out free milk and bread. Never give out your Medicare number to anyone uninvited. If he comes by again, get his name and phone number so you can report him to Medicare.*

Dear Grandma Rosa,
My Medicare statement said I was receiving weekly breathing treatments. I use an inhaler for asthma, but I do not receive weekly treatments. What do I do?
- Juanita

*Dear Juanita,
You are so smart to check your Medicare statements. Sometimes providers send in the wrong medical billing code to receive more money for services. Call your doctor's office and make them aware. Also, call Medicare and let them know this is incorrect. They will correct the statement with the doctor's office.*

Dear Grandma Rosa,
I went to the clinic today and had my blood drawn for testing. The billing clerk asked for my Medicare number. I thought the test was free if I had Medicare?
- Carlos

*Dear Carlos,
The test is free. They only needed your Medicare number for their records. For clinical laboratory tests, there is no co-payment and a provider may state that the test is free, since there is no cost to the person with Medicare.*



Do not give your Medicare number to uninvited strangers who come to your door.



Do not accept services over the phone from those calling to offer "FREE" items from Medicare.



Check your Medicare statements to make sure your doctor has billed Medicare for only services you received.



Make sure you know the services Medicare offers before you go to the doctor. Be smart like Grandma Rosa!



LOCAL HELP FOR PEOPLE WITH MEDICARE

This publication may have been partially funded by grants from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services and the U.S. Administration on Community Living.