



'Care Share

Gave Out Medicare Number, What Do I Do?

If you have been one of the millions of people to experience Medicare fraud, know that it isn't your fault. Scammers are professionals at what they do. If you did give out your Medicare number, do not be embarrassed or ashamed. Also, don't hide it. If you know someone may have your number, please report it.

Oh no,
**I gave out my Medicare number.
 What do I do now?**

- 1** Know that it's not your fault. Scammers are tricky! They put on pressure, lie, and earn your trust. Don't feel guilty.
- 2** Call your local Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) and tell them what happened. They will help you with the steps to take to report your Medicare number stolen.

Medicare fraud can do a lot of harm, not only to the Medicare program itself, but also to you, the beneficiary. Medical identity theft, health impacts like wrong diagnoses and treatments, and financial losses are very real consequences. Reading your Medicare statements each month is an important thing you can do to make sure you aren't a victim of Medicare fraud. Medicare loses billions of dollars each year due to fraud, errors, and abuse. Estimates place these losses at approximately \$60 billion annually, though the exact figure is impossible to measure.

If your Medicare number is stolen, there are so many things that can happen. You can pay for things that you never actually get, or you can get hurt when you get tests, medicine, or care you don't need.

The Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) is here to help. Call 1-800-551-3191 to talk to someone if you think you've experienced Medicare fraud or medical identity theft.

Pharmacy and Prescription Drug Fraud

There are many types of pharmacy and prescription drug schemes. A few examples include:

- You see charged on your Medicare Summary Notice (MSN) or Explanation of Benefits (EOB) charges for:
 - Drugs that were never picked up, delivered, or even prescribed.
 - Drugs (sometimes controlled drugs such as opioids) that were prescribed by a doctor you have never seen.
 - Drugs beyond the amount you were prescribed.
 - A different prescription drug, often one that costs more, than the one you were prescribed.
 - A drug that is not approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA).
- A pharmacy purposely provided you with less medication than you were prescribed or expired drugs.
- A pharmacy gave you and billed for a costly compounded medication, such as a pain cream, when a lower cost prescription was ordered by your doctor.
- A pharmacy offers you “free” or “discount” drugs without an order from your doctor and then bills Medicare.
- A pharmacy refills a prescription that you no longer need without you knowing it. You don’t pick it up, but the pharmacy still bills Medicare.
- Someone offers to pay you for the use of your Medicare number to bill for prescription drugs or offers you cash or other payment to pick up prescriptions for you.



Read your Medicare statements to check for errors or suspicious charges.



If you have any concerns about your Medicare statements or medications, contact your local **Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP)**. Your SMP can help and report the potential fraud to the correct authorities. Contact information for your local SMP is on the last page of this document.

March 2024-Medicare Minute Handout-Part D Coverage Phases-Medicare Rights Center-Feb 23, 2024

The Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) is ready to provide you with the information you need to PROTECT yourself from Medicare fraud, errors, and abuse; DETECT potential fraud, errors, and abuse; and REPORT your concerns. SMPs help educate and empower Medicare beneficiaries in the fight against health care fraud. Your SMP can help you with your questions, concerns, or complaints about potential fraud and abuse issues. It also provides information and educational presentations. To reach Montana Senior Medicare Patrol, call 1-800-551-3191 or visit www.smpresource.org.