



You Can Help Protect Yourself and Medicare from Fraud Committed by Dishonest Suppliers

Medicare fraud steals money from the Medicare program each year. The result is higher health care costs for you. You can help prevent fraud by making sure that your medical equipment supplier is Medicare-approved (accredited) and they provide you with the equipment that best fits your medical needs. **Only give personal information to suppliers who are approved by Medicare.**

To check if your supplier is Medicare-approved, visit www.medicare.gov/supplier, or call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.

How to Spot Fraud and Abuse

Medicare fraud can happen in a number of ways. One way is when a supplier who isn't approved by Medicare asks for your business. It can also happen if your supplier gives false or misleading information to you or Medicare to get payment for items or supplies that aren't medically necessary or you never got. This includes having Medicare pay for more advanced equipment than you need.

Identity theft is another form of fraud. Identity theft happens when someone uses your personal information without your consent to commit fraud or other crimes. Personal information includes things like your name, and Social Security, Medicare, credit card, or bank account numbers. **Keep this information safe.**

You can help protect yourself and Medicare by looking out for the following:

- Suppliers who offer you free equipment
- Suppliers who want you to use their doctors
- Anyone you don't know asking for your Medicare or Social Security number
- Calls from companies you didn't give your phone number to
- Charges for products or services you didn't get



What to Do if You Suspect Fraud and Abuse

If you think a charge is incorrect and you know the supplier, you may first want to call his or her office to ask about it. The person you speak to may give you information that helps you better understand supplies you got. Or, they may realize a billing error was made that needs to be corrected. Correcting a billing error helps both you and Medicare.

If you've contacted the supplier and you suspect that Medicare is being charged for an item or supply you didn't get, or you don't know the supplier on the claim, call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.

If you suspect identity theft, or think you gave your personal information to someone you shouldn't have, call the Federal Trade Commission's ID Theft Hotline at 1-877-438 4338. TTY users should call 1-866-653-4261.

For More Information

For more information on protecting yourself from Medicare fraud and tips for spotting and reporting fraud, you can do any of the following:

- Visit www.stopmedicarefraud.gov.
- Call your local Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) office. The SMP Program educates and empowers people with Medicare to take an active role in detecting and preventing health care fraud and abuse. The SMP Program not only protects people with Medicare, it also helps preserve Medicare. For more information, or to find your local SMP Program, visit www.smpresource.org, or call 1-877-808-2468.
- Visit www.consumer.gov/idtheft to learn more about identity theft.