



Medicaid Fraud

Tips for Protecting Yourself and Medicaid

Medicaid fraud is big business for criminals. The Medicaid program spent about \$400 billion in 2010 and the government thinks more than \$22 billion of that was “improperly spent” — meaning the care was not necessary or the bill was wrong. That dollar amount probably doesn’t include all the money that was stolen by scam artists looking to rip off you and the government.

Medicaid fraud hurts us all. When bad health care providers steal from Medicaid, there is less money for the things patients need. People can get hurt when doctors or other providers give less or more care than needed just to make more money.

In one case of Medicaid fraud, the person who committed the fraud was sentenced to 20 months of incarceration and ordered to pay \$1 million in restitution.

She was found guilty of aiding and abetting health care fraud, providing services by unlicensed practitioners and billing Medicaid for services that were not covered.

What is Medicaid Fraud?

Billing for “phantom patients”

Example: A doctor or therapist bills Medicaid for a service that was never provided. Some health care providers have even been caught billing for patients who had passed away.

- **Double billing**

Example: A health care provider bills Medicaid twice for the same procedure or service.

- **Billing or providing unneeded services**

Example: A doctor puts a diagnosis or symptom in a patient’s records that the patient doesn’t really have. The doctor then bills for services not provided.

- **Billing patients extra for covered services**

Example: A doctor charges Medicaid for a service and then bills the patient for the difference between what Medicaid pays and what the doctor would like to be paid.

- **Prescription drug substitution**

Example: A pharmacist fills a prescription with a generic drug but bills Medicaid for a brand name drug that costs more.

- **Kickbacks**

Example: A medical equipment or home health provider offers items such as cash, gifts or free vacations to doctors who refer Medicaid patients to them.

Protect, Detect, Report

Medicaid Fraud Prevention Tips

- ✓ Do not give your Medicaid or Medicare numbers to telephone callers, door-to-door solicitors or to anyone you do not know.
- ✓ Treat your Medicaid and Medicare cards like you would a credit card — never “loan” them to anyone.
- ✓ Do not show or share your Medicaid or Medicare card in exchange for money or “free” services or supplies.
- ✓ Do not give your Medicaid number for “free” medical tests. If it is “free,” they don’t need to see your card.
- ✓ Never sign a blank form. Always read and keep a copy of any document you sign.



A sample Medicare Health Insurance card for Jane Doe. The card includes the following information: NAME OF BENEFICIARY: JANE DOE; MEDICARE CLAIM NUMBER: 000-00-0000-A; SEX: FEMALE; IS ENTITLED TO: HOSPITAL MEDICAL (PART A); EFFECTIVE DATE: 07-01-1986; SIGN HERE: (blank line). The card also features the Medicare logo and the text "DO NOT SEND CLAIMS FOR PAYMENT OF MEDICARE BENEFITS TO THIS (↓) ADDRESS". A large "SAMPLE" watermark is overlaid on the card.

Don't Confuse Medicaid with Medicare

Medicaid is a program run by the federal *and* state governments to help pay medical costs for low-income people such as:

- Families, children, pregnant women
- The elderly and persons with disabilities
- Recipients of Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Women diagnosed with breast or cervical cancer

Medicare is a federal health insurance program for:

- People age 65 or older
- People under the age of 65 with certain disabilities
- People of any age who have permanent kidney failure requiring dialysis or a kidney transplant
- Certain people with ALS (Lou Gehrig's disease or amyotrophic lateral sclerosis)

Call Your Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP): 1-800-247-4422

Your local SMP is ready to provide you with the information you need to PROTECT yourself from Medicare error, fraud, and abuse; DETECT potential error, fraud, and abuse; and REPORT your concerns. SMPs and their trained volunteers 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.



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