



Iowa Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP)

a Project of *Northeast Iowa Area Agency on Aging (NEI3A)*
October 2015 **News You Can Use**

OPEN ENROLLMENT/OPEN SEASON FOR CON-ARTISTS

Fall Open Enrollment occurs from October 15 to December 7 of every year. Medicare Open Enrollment is just around the corner. Beneficiaries can make changes to their Medicare Part D (prescription drugs) and Medicare Advantage plans from October 15 – December 7. But while it's open enrollment for beneficiaries, it's also unfortunately open season for con-artists hoping to steal your personal and financial information. In fact, Americans lose more than 60 billion dollars each year to Medicare fraud.

Be on the lookout for Medicare fraud:

- **Medicare will never call you requesting personal information (your Medicare number, Social Security number, banking information, etc.).**
- **Protect yourself when dealing with private companies who offer Medicare plans.**
- **Understand how a plan works before you join.**
- **Protect yourself from identity theft. Guard your cards, and keep your information safe.**
- **Nothing is ever “free.” Don't accept offers of money or gifts for free medical services.**

Medicare plan benefits and your needs change each year, so it is important to review your current plan to see if it still works for you.

If you have questions about your current plan, call your provider. The phone number should be on materials you have or you can compare your current plan with others through Medicare.gov.

If you want free and unbiased assistance comparing Medicare Advantage or prescription plans, contact SHIP at 1-800-351-4664. If you think a salesperson has broken rules or acted unprofessionally, contact Iowa Senior Medicare Patrol at 1-800-423-2449 to obtain assistance in reporting this to the appropriate officials.

Call 1-800-MEDICARE if:

- You think you were enrolled in a Medicare plan without your consent.
- You believe a Medicare plan or an insurance agent representing a Medicare plan misled you.
- You think a Medicare plan may be breaking the rules.
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