



# FRAUD ALERT

APRIL 2019

## DURABLE MEDICAL EQUIPMENT (DME) SCAM— HAVE YOU RECEIVED UNWANTED PACKAGE(S) CONTAINING BRACES?

### How the Scam Works:

Durable Medical Equipment (DME) has been an area ripe with fraud for many years. Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) programs nationwide are seeing many cases where Medicare beneficiaries are receiving “DROP SHIPMENTS” of unwanted and unordered braces (ankle, back, knee, neck, shoulder, wrist, etc.) from out-of-state suppliers and ordered by out of state doctors that the beneficiary has does not know and has never seen. These are supplies your doctor did not order, you did not order, and you do not want!

Seniors are also receiving an alarming number of phone calls from scamsters who ask about joint pain and then offer braces to help—they just need your Medicare number! **This is a SCAM.** Remember, NEVER give your personal information (Medicare number-OLD or NEW, SS number, or your bank account number) to anyone who calls you.

Even when you tell the caller you do not want the item(s), you may receive them anyway. Sometimes you may agree to one item, but when the package arrives, it includes MANY other braces you did not order.

**How to Respond:** If you are a victim of this scam, please take the following steps:

#### **UNOPENED PACKAGE**

1. DO NOT OPEN THE PACKAGE!
2. If possible, REFUSE UNOPENED PACKAGE at point of delivery; OR
3. If package was dropped off on your doorstep, you may return the UNOPENED package to the carrier, i.e. USPS, FedEx, UPS, etc.
5. Write down or take a picture of any information about the supplier from the outside of the box
6. Keep a return receipt as proof of the return. Medicare will ask for this when reporting the fraud.
7. If you are unable to return the package to the carrier, call the carrier to come pick the unopened package up.
8. Report receipt of any unordered DME items as FRAUD to 1-800-MEDICARE or to the **AR SMP—866-726-2916**. Copies of all documentation related to the item(s), i.e. MSN, return receipt, and all information related to supplier, will be required in order to assist with recoupment of payment to Medicare.
7. Be prepared for more phone calls, don't answer or—**JUST HANG UP!**
8. Be prepared for more items to arrive—**REFUSE OR RETURN THE UNOPENED PACKAGE(S)!**

#### **OPENED PACKAGE**

1. If package was dropped off on your doorstep and you unsuspectingly opened the package to see the contents, if possible, please contact the supplier and ask for a pre-paid, return label to send unordered items back. Return should be at no cost to you.
  - ⇒ Sometimes the phone number included in or on the package is non-working;
  - ⇒ Oftentimes the company name and address are bogus;
  - ⇒ If this is the case, we ask that you keep the items until the AR SMP can determine the best plan of action.
5. If the supplier answers the phone and agrees to send you a return receipt, keep a copy of the return receipt as proof of the return. Medicare will ask for this when reporting the fraud.
6. Report receipt of any unordered DME items as FRAUD to 1-800-MEDICARE or to the **AR SMP—866-726-2916**. Copies of all documentation related to the contents, i.e. MSN, return receipt, and all information related to supplier, will be required in order to assist with recoupment of payment to Medicare.
7. Be prepared for more phone calls, don't answer or—**JUST HANG UP!**
8. Be prepared for more items to arrive—**REFUSE OR RETURN THE UNOPENED PACKAGE(S)!**

### **What You Should Know:**

- \* In order for Medicare to pay for DME products, the item(s) should be medically necessary, prescribed by your personal doctor, and ordered from a Medicare-approved supplier who accepts assignment. In order to find a supplier, ask your doctor or call the **AR SMP for assistance—866-726-2916**.
- \* If supplier reimburses Medicare for the returned item(s), you should receive an ADJUSTED Medicare Summary Notice (MSN) showing that Medicare denied the claim and the Medicare approved amount for the claim is \$0.00. This means that Medicare has recouped payment or has requested recoupment from the supplier.