

PROTECT YOURSELF AGAINST HOME HEALTH CARE FRAUD

Home health care is one of the top areas of fraud in the Medicare program. It is important to know what Medicare pays for so you can recognize suspected fraudulent charges when reviewing the Medicare Summary Notice (MSN). Home health care fraud happens when Medicare is charged for services when you do not meet Medicare's definition of home bound. You must be certified as home bound in order to get home health services.

What You Should Know:

What is Medicare's definition of home bound?

Medicare considers you homebound if:

- **You need the help of another person or medical equipment such as crutches, a walker, or a wheelchair to leave your home**, or your doctor believes that your health or illness could get worse if you leave your home.
- Your doctor should decide if you are homebound based on their evaluation of your condition. If you qualify for Medicare's home health benefit, your plan of care will also certify that you are homebound. After you start receiving home health care, your doctor is required to evaluate and recertify your every 60 days.
- Even if you are homebound, you can still leave your home for medical treatment, religious services, or to attend a licensed or accredited adult day care center, without putting your homebound status at risk.

How to Recognize Home Health Care Fraud:

- You were enrolled in home health services by a doctor you do not know.
- You received home health services when you did not meet Medicare's "homebound" criteria and Medicare was billed for services that were medically unnecessary.
- Someone came to your home and provided housekeeping or medication services, but your MSN shows that Medicare was billed for services like skilled nursing or other therapy that were not provided.
- You accepted cash or gifts in exchange for going along with a home health scam.
- Offered things such as "free" groceries or a "free" ride from a home health agency in exchange for your Medicare number or to switch to a different home health agency.
- You are charged a co-payment for home health services.
- You are asked to sign forms verifying that home health services were provided even though you did not receive any services.

How to Respond:

The AR SMP urges Medicare recipients to ALWAYS review their Medicare Summary Notices. If you see it, report suspected home health care charges to the AR SMP at 866-726-2916.

REPORT all scams to the Arkansas SMP — 866-726-2916