



Federal Law Enforcement Action Involving Fraudulent Genetic Testing Results in Charges Against 35 Individuals Responsible for Over \$2.1 Billion in Losses in One of the Largest Health Care Fraud Schemes Ever Charged

Elderly Patients Nationwide Lured into Criminal Scheme; Centers for Program Integrity & Medicare Services Takes Administrative Action against Providers that Submitted Over \$1.7 Billion in Claims

A federal law enforcement action involving fraudulent genetic cancer testing has resulted in charges in five federal districts against 35 defendants associated with dozens of telemedicine companies and cancer genetic testing laboratories (CGx) for their alleged participation in one of the largest health care fraud schemes ever charged. According to the charges, these defendants fraudulently billed Medicare more than \$2.1 billion for these CGx tests. Among those charged today are 10 medical professionals, including nine doctors. The Department of Justice, Criminal Division, together with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of the Inspector General (HHS-OIG) and FBI spearheaded today's landmark investigation and prosecution that resulted in charges against CEOs, CFOs and others.

In addition, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, Center for Program Integrity (CMS/CPI), announced today that it took adverse administrative action against cancer genetic testing companies and medical professionals who submitted more than \$1.7 billion in claims to the Medicare program.

Today's announcement is a culmination of coordinated law enforcement activities over the past month that were led by the Criminal Division's Health Care Fraud Unit, resulting in charges against over 380 individuals who allegedly billed federal health care programs for more than \$3 billion and allegedly prescribed/dispensed approximately 50 million controlled substance pills in Houston, across Texas, the West Coast, the Gulf Coast, the Northeast, Florida and Georgia, and the Midwest. These include charges against 105 defendants for opioid-related offenses, and charges against 178 medical professionals.

Today's enforcement actions were led and coordinated by the Health Care Fraud Unit of the Criminal Division's Fraud Section in conjunction with its Medicare Fraud Strike Force (MFSF), as well as the U.S. Attorney's Offices for the Southern District of Florida, Middle District of Florida, Southern District of Georgia, Eastern District of Louisiana,

and Middle District of Louisiana. The MFSF is a partnership among the Criminal Division, U.S. Attorney's Offices, the FBI, DEA and HHS-OIG. In addition, the operation included the participation of various other federal, state and local law enforcement agencies, including the Louisiana Medicaid Fraud Control Unit.

The coordinated federal investigation targeted an alleged scheme involving the payment of illegal kickbacks and bribes by CGx laboratories in exchange for the referral of Medicare beneficiaries by medical professionals working with fraudulent telemedicine companies for expensive cancer genetic tests that were medically unnecessary.

Often, the test results were not provided to the beneficiaries or were worthless to their actual doctors. Some of the defendants allegedly controlled a telemarketing network that lured hundreds of thousands of elderly and/or disabled patients into a criminal scheme that affected victims nationwide. The defendants allegedly paid doctors to prescribe CGx testing, either without any patient interaction or with only a brief telephonic conversation with patients they had never met or seen.

"These defendants allegedly duped Medicare beneficiaries into signing up for unnecessary genetic tests, costing Medicare billions of dollars," Assistant Attorney General Brian A. Benczkowski of the Justice Department's Criminal Division. "Together with our law enforcement partners, the Department will continue to protect the public fisc and prosecute those who steal our taxpayer dollars."

"The scope and sophistication of the health care fraud detected in Operation Double Helix and the related Operation Brace Yourself is nearly unprecedented. But the citizens of the Southern District of Georgia should know that we put together an unprecedented response," said U.S. Attorney Bobby L. Christine of the Southern District of Georgia. ...

Our office charged more defendants, responsible for more health care fraud losses, than ever before in this office's history. While these charges might be some of the first, they won't be the last.

—U.S. Attorney
Bobby L. Christine

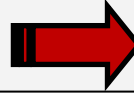
Continued Page 3—

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

INSIDE MEDICARE.....	Pg 2
Social Security Scam Reporting.....	Pg 3
Medicare Authorized Rep	Pg 4
2020 Census.....	Pg 5
LGBTQ Elder Information.....	Pg 5
Volunteer Event Photos.....	Pg 6-7
Fraud in the News.....	Pg 8
Scams.....	Pg 9
Calendar of Events.....	Pg 10
Phone Numbers/Websites.....	Pg 11
SMP Mission/Partners.....	Pg 12

INSIDE MEDICARE—

Does your Medicare card look like this?



—SAVE THESE DATES—

JANUARY 1—MARCH 31, 2020

The **Medicare Advantage *DISENROLLMENT* Period** when individuals can disenroll from current Advantage plan and enroll in another Advantage plan.

This dis-enrollment period allows the individual to return to Original Medicare and enroll in a prescription drug plan.

JANUARY 1—MARCH 31, 2020

The **General Election Period (GEP)** for individuals **NEW TO MEDICARE** who missed their Part B Initial Enrollment. Coverage will not start until July 1 2020.

MEDICARE HEALTH INSURANCE	
Name/Nombre	JOHN L SMITH
Medicare Number/Número de Medicare	1EG4-TE5-MK72
Entitled to/Con derecho a	HOSPITAL (PART A)
Coverage starts/Cobertura empieza	03-01-2016
	MEDICAL (PART B)
	03-01-2016

If you didn't receive your new Medicare card with a new Medicare number, there might be a problem that needs to be corrected, like updating your mailing address. If so, you will need to call your local Social Security office to update your address and order your new Medicare card.

You may also call the **Arkansas Senior Medicare Patrol (AR SMP)** or assistance with ordering your new card
—866-726-2916—

IMPORTANT!

Starting January 1, 2020, your provider will need your new Medicare number to submit claims.

Medicare will only accept claims submitted with the NEW Medicare number.

Medicare will reject any claims submitted with the OLD Medicare number.

DESTROY YOUR OLD MEDICARE CARD!



DO NOT CARRY YOUR OLD MEDICARE CARD!

DO NOT CARRY YOUR SOCIAL SECURITY CARD!

What's New in 2020?



Part A: hospital insurance

Part A premium	Free if you've worked 10 years or more \$252 per month if you've worked 7.5 to 10 years \$458 per month if you've worked fewer than 7.5 years
Part A hospital deductible	\$1,408 each benefit period
Part A hospital coinsurance	\$0 for the first 60 days of inpatient care each benefit period \$352 per day for days 61-90 each benefit period \$704 per lifetime reserve day after day 90 in a benefit period. (You have 60 lifetime reserve days that can only be used once. They're not renewable.)
Skilled nursing facility coinsurance	\$0 for the first 20 days of inpatient care each benefit period \$176/day for days 21-100 each benefit period



Part B: medical insurance

Part B premium	\$144.60 is the standard premium (You might pay more if your yearly income is above \$87,000 if single or above \$174,000 if married.)
Part B deductible	\$198 per year
Part B coinsurance	20% on most services Part B covers



Part D: prescription drug coverage

Part D premium	Average is \$32.74 per month
Part D maximum deductible	\$435 per year

“The defendants allegedly targeted elderly, disabled and other vulnerable consumers, luring them into this fraudulent scheme that affected victims nationwide and generated losses in excess of one billion dollars which spanned multiple jurisdictions,” said U.S. Attorney Peter G. Strasser for the Eastern District of Louisiana. “Schemes such as these have a profound effect on our nation, not only by the monies lost in the scheme, but also by stoking public distrust in some medical institutions. It is imperative to preserve taxpayer confidence whenever and wherever possible. Our office, along with our investigative partners, reminds seniors and their caregivers to be vigilant for fraudulent schemes. If you are aware of or believe you are the victim of a health care fraud scheme, please contact law enforcement.”

“The defendants are alleged to have capitalized on the fears of elderly Americans in order to induce them to sign up for unnecessary or non-existent cancer screening tests,” said U.S. Attorney Ariana Fajardo Orshan of the Southern District of Florida. “The

genetic testing fraud schemes put personal greed above the preservation of the American health care system. The U.S. Attorney’s Office in South Florida, alongside our law enforcement and USAO partners, remains committed to protecting taxpayer dollars and the Medicare program from abuse.”

“We are honored to work every day alongside our law enforcement partners to stop the exploitation of vulnerable patients and misuse of taxpayer dollars,” said CMS Administrator Seema Verma. “In order to prevent additional financial losses, CMS has taken swift action to protect the Medicare Trust Funds from the providers who allegedly have fraudulently billed over \$1.7 billion. CMS continues to use a comprehensive and aggressive program integrity approach that includes fraud prevention, claims review, beneficiary education, and targeting high-risk areas of the federal healthcare programs with new tools and innovative demonstrations.”

“Healthcare fraud and related illegal kickbacks and bribes impact the entire nation,” said Assistant Director Terry Wade of the FBI’s Criminal Investigative Division. “Fraudulently using genetic testing laboratories for unnecessary tests erodes the confidence of patients and costs taxpayers millions of

dollars. These investigations revealed some medical professionals placing their greed before the needs of the patients and communities they serve. Today’s law enforcement actions reinforce that the FBI, along with its partners, will continue to pursue and stop this type of illegal activity.”

“Unfortunately, audacious schemes such as those alleged in the indictments are pervasive and exploit the promise of new medical technologies such as genetic testing and telemedicine for financial gain, not patient care,” said Deputy Inspector General for Investigations Gary L. Cantrell of HHS-OIG. “Instead of receiving quality care, Medicare beneficiaries may be victimized in the form of scare tactics, identity theft, and in some cases, left to pay out of pocket. We will continue working with our law enforcement partners to investigate those who steal from federal healthcare programs and protect the millions of Americans who rely on them.”

SOURCE: Press Release – U.S. Dept. of Justice -
September 27, 2019:

<https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/federal-law-enforcement-action-involving-fraudulent-genetic-testing-results-charges-against>

FROM THE SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION—

The Social Security Administration launched an online form at <https://oig.ssa.gov> to receive reports from the public of Social Security-related scams. These scams—in which fraudulent callers mislead victims into making cash or gift card payments to avoid arrest for purported Social Security number problems—skyrocketed over the past year to become the #1 type of fraud reported to the Federal Trade Commission and the Social Security Administration.

For more information, please visit <https://www.ssa.gov/news/press/releases/>:

The public is encouraged to use the new online form to report Social Security phone scams including robocalls and live callers, as well as email, text, and in-person scams. The form allows people to create a unique Personal Identification Number (PIN), so if OIG contacts a person about their report, they will know the call is legitimate.

Social Security will not:

- Tell you that your Social Security number has been suspended.
- Contact you to demand an immediate payment.
- Ask you for credit or debit card numbers over the phone.
- Require a specific means of debt repayment, like a prepaid debit card, a retail gift card, or cash.
- Demand that you pay a Social Security debt without the ability to appeal the amount you owe.
- Promise a Social Security benefit approval, or increase, in exchange for information or money.

https://oig.ssa.gov/?utm_content=pressrelease&utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery



866-726-2916

Because senior citizens are the #1 target of health care fraud and scams, the goal of the **Arkansas Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP)** is to empower seniors, their families, friends and caregivers, to be protective of their Medicare and personal information.

The SMP offers free educational presentations about scams and how to recognize and report suspicious Medicare billing.

We discuss the importance of reviewing the Medicare Summary Notice (MSN), and we furnish free materials and tools to equip seniors with the resources they need to be better health care consumers.

Call 866-726-2916 for assistance in resolving any errors or suspicious charges found on the MSN or **to schedule a free presentation in your area** to learn about the latest fraud and scams and important information about the new Medicare card!

PROTECT — DETECT — REPORT

Who has the right to request your SSN?

Federal law mandates that state Departments of Motor Vehicles, tax authorities, welfare offices, and other governmental agencies request your SS number as proof that you are who you claim to be. However, the Privacy Act of 1974 requires that government agencies at the local, state, and federal level disclose to each person whether submitting your Social Security number is required, details on the use of this information, and what law or authority requires its use.

Please note that this Act stipulates that no one can deny you a government service or benefit for failing to provide your SSN unless federal law specifically requires it.

You aren't legally required to provide your SSN to businesses unless one of the following is true:

- * You'll be engaging in a transaction that requires notification to the Internal Revenue Service; or

- * You're initiating a financial transaction subject to federal Customer Identification Program rules.

If you refuse to provide your SSN, companies may choose not to do business with you, but there's no law that prevents them from asking for it.

These are some examples of businesses that require a Social Security number for legitimate purposes:

- * Insurance companies
- * Credit card companies <<https://www.identityhawk.com/spot-suspicious-credit-card-activity>>, lenders, and any other company receiving a credit application from you

- * The three main credit reporting agencies: TransUnion, Equifax, and Experian

- * Any company that sells products or services that require notification to the IRS, including investment advisors; banks; real estate purchases; financial transactions over \$10,000, such as automobile purchases; and other financial transactions

It's important to remember that, once a company has your Social Security number, there are few restrictions <<https://www.identityhawk.com/data-breach>> on what they can do with it. You'll therefore want to share this information only when absolutely necessary or required by law.

Being very careful about sharing your SSN <<http://www.ssa.gov/pubs/10002.html#protect>> or any other personal information is a recommended way to help deter identity theft.

Source: <https://www.identityhawk.com/Who-Can-Lawfully-Request-My-Social-Security-Number/>

DOSE OF REALITY:

- ◇ **Most people who abuse prescription painkillers get them through friends or relatives — NOT their doctor, dentist or pharmacist.**
- ◇ **The greatest increase in drug-related deaths is due to the misuse of prescription drugs.**
- ◇ **1 in 3 Medicare recipients have received an opioid prescription.**

Visit **Dose of Reality** for more information:



PARENTS and GRANDPARENTS: 4 out of 10 teens believe prescription drugs are less dangerous and less addictive than street drugs, and in **Arkansas**, the prescription painkiller death rate for those under 55 in 2016 was nearly 5 times higher than it was in 2001.

NEED SOMEONE ELSE TO CALL MEDICARE FOR YOU?

Would you like for a family member or caregiver to be able to call Medicare on your behalf?

Medicare can't give your personal health information to anyone unless they have permission in writing first.

How to add an authorized representative—

There are 2 ways to give permission:

- (1) Print and fill out form **CMS-10106: "Authorization to Disclose Personal Health Information"** and then mail it to Medicare; or
- (2) Submit the form online with a **Medicare account**.

Don't have a **Medicare account** yet? Signing up is easy and gives you electronic access to your health information. Once you've signed up, **fill out and submit the form online by following these steps**:

1. Click on your name in the top right corner of the page.
2. Click "My account."
3. Select "Manage my representatives."
4. Click "Medicare Authorization to Disclose Personal Health Information form."
5. Enter the requested information and click the "Continue" button.

2020 Census: Fact v Fiction

November 14, 2019 / by Colleen Tressler / Consumer Education Specialist, FTC

The Federal Trade Commission is partnering with the U.S. Census Bureau to help you guard against potential census scams. Knowing how the 2020 Census process works, what information you will — and won't — be asked for, and some red flags will help you spot and report scams.

The Process

In mid-March 2020, the Census Bureau will start mailing out (and, in some areas, hand delivering) invitations to participate in the 2020 Census. You should get yours by April 1. You can respond online, by phone, or by mail.

The Census Bureau has an important job: to count every person living in the United States. Starting in May 2020, census takers will start visiting homes that haven't responded to make sure everyone is counted. If you aren't home or can't come to the door, the census taker will come back up to six times. Each time, they'll leave a door hanger with a phone number so you can call to schedule a visit.

The Questions

The census questionnaire asks how many people are in the home at the time you complete the form; their sex, age, race, ethnicity; their relationships to one another; phone number; and whether you own or rent the home. For the full list of questions on the 2020 Census, visit Questions Asked.

Signs of a Scam

Scammers may pose as census takers to get your personal information — and then use it to commit identity theft and other frauds. But there are ways you can identify official census takers.

Census takers must show a photo ID with the U.S. Department of Commerce seal and an expiration date. If you ask, the census taker will give you a supervisor's contact information and/or the census regional office phone number for verification.

The Census Bureau will never ask for your full Social Security number, bank account or credit card numbers, money or donations, or anything on behalf of a political party. The 2020 Census will not ask citizenship status.

The Census Bureau may call you as part of their follow-up and quality control efforts. They also might call if you're not home when a census taker stops by or when a personal visit is not convenient. Calls will come from one of the Census Bureau's contact centers or from a field representative. Since we all know you can't trust caller ID, visit How to identify a phone call from the Census Bureau for the phone numbers you can use to check out any calls you might get.

Visit 2020 Census Rumors to fact-check and ask questions. If you suspect fraud, call 800-923-8282 to speak with a local Census Bureau representative.

SOURCE: <https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/blog/2019/11/2020-census-fact-v-fiction>

Elder LGBTQ Information

SAGE's National LGBT Elder Hotline 877-360-LGBT—SAGE's National LGBT Elder Hotline is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. You can request to speak with someone in English or Spanish by calling 877-360-LGBT.

SAGE's Senior Medicare Patrol and State Health Insurance Assistance Program LGBT Beneficiary Project is funded by the Administration on Aging (Grant # 90SM0016-01-0).

Accessing Information on Medicare Benefits for LGBT People

The ever-evolving legal rights and Medicare benefits that affect lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) individuals and married couples can be challenging to follow.

This resource document provides links to organizations providing relevant information:

ACLU

Transgender People and Healthcare
www.aclu.org/issues/lgbt-rights/transgender-rights/transgender-people-and-health-care

Center for Medicare Advocacy

LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender)

Persons & Health: Available Resources
www.medicareadvocacy.org/medicare-info/lesbiangay-Bisexual-and-transgender-lgbt-seniors/#orgs

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

Office of Minority Health
www.cms.gov/about-cms/agency-information/omh/index.html

Special Populations Help
marketplace.cms.gov/technical-assistanceresources/special-populations-help.html

Human Rights Campaign

Health & Aging
www.hrc.org/explore/topic/health-and-aging

Lambda Legal

After DOMA: Medicare Spousal Protections
<http://www.lambdalegal.org/publications/afterdoma-Medicare>

Medicare Rights Center

Consumer Fact Sheets
www.medicarerights.org/resources/consumer-factsheets

National Center for Lesbian Rights Healthcare

www.nclrights.org/our-work/healthcare/

National Center for Transgender Equality

Know Your Rights – Healthcare
www.transequality.org/know-your-rights/healthcare

National Resource Center on LGBT Aging

www.lgbtagingcenter.org

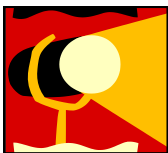
Services & Advocacy for LGBT Elders Medicare Fraud

www.sageusa.org/issues/smps.cfm

Transgender Law Center

Medicare Update
<http://transgenderlawcenter.org/archives/3839>

SOURCE: <https://www.lgbtagingcenter.org/resources/pdfs/SAGE%20SHIP%20Sheet%20Medicare%20Info%20FINAL%20Web.pdf>



SMP VOLUNTEERS IN THE SPOTLIGHT!

Really Special and Valuable People!

9th Annual Advisory Council & Volunteer Appreciation & Update Training—2019
The Heritage Room, Burns Park Golf Course, North Little Rock AR



HERE'S TO OUR *RED CARPET* STARS OF 2019!



MARGIE JONES,
AR SMP Ambassador
Volunteer was
awarded the
Presenter Award for
the most presentations
in 2019!

Our appreciation to
Margie for her tireless
and motivated work
for our program!
We love you and
appreciate you!

**2019 SMP
VOLUNTEER
OF THE YEAR**

Awarded to **June Brown**

*Congratulations June!
We love you and
appreciate you!*



Gloria Gordon, covers her ears as she receives a
thunderous applause of thanks for her continued
unselfish and unparalleled contribution to the
AR SMP program! Thank you Gloria! We love
you and appreciate you!



The RSVP of Central Arkansas
was awarded the **"Boots on
the Ground"** award for "most
volunteers recruited in senior
housing communities" during
the months of July, August and
September 2019.

Congratulations! We love you
and appreciate you!

Pictured: Lisa Strain,
Volunteer Coordinator, RSVP
of Central Arkansas.



JAY HILL, Director, AR Div. of Aging, Adult & Behavioral Health Services delivers an update on Arkansas DHS and our division and past and upcoming changes! Thank you for taking time to attend the SMP event! We love you and appreciate you!

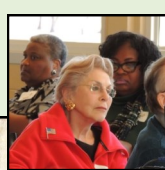


We were pleased to have as Guest Speaker, **DR. ROSALIE OTTERS**, and her precious family. Dr. Otters educated the group on growing older in this day and age and "What Has Age Got To Do With It?" Thank you for accepting our invitation to speak at this year's event! We love you and appreciate you!

WHAT HAS AGE GOT TO DO WITH IT?



SMP Volunteer, Gus Swain, offers up a blessing over our food before lunch. Thank you, Gus, for doing this every year!



Everyone enjoyed the lively performance of the Mt. St. Mary Academy ACABELLA group who entertained us by singing Christmas songs in acapella! Great job girls! You all sang beautifully and we loved your performance!
MUST BE MOUNT GIRLS!



Federal Law Enforcement Action Involving Fraudulent Genetic Testing—

September 27, 2019

The Department of Justice (DOJ) along with the US DHHS Office of Inspector General (OIG) and the FBI investigated and charged 35 individuals (among whom were 10 medical professionals, including 9 doctors) associated with dozens of telemedicine companies and cancer genetic testing laboratories for the alleged participation in one the largest health care fraud schemes ever charged. Elderly patients nationwide were lured into the criminal scheme, and these defendants are responsible for billing Medicare more than \$2.1 billion for lab tests.

<https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/federal-law-enforcement-action-involving-fraudulent-genetic-testing-results-charges-against>

Ohio man leads guilty in Augusta area Medicaid/Medicare fraud case—

November 7, 2019

A judge sentenced a man who pleaded guilty to Medicaid fraud and conspiracy to defraud the state to 10 years of probation and imposed a \$5,000 fine. The man and several others went door to door offering people free DNA screening for cancer and other diseases, an assistant district attorney said. They dressed in scrubs and wore “genetic testing technician” badges. They took mouth swabs and obtained victims’ personal identity information and their Medicaid or Medicare numbers. The man said he got the job from Craigslist, to be paid \$200 per swab. He initially thought it was legitimate, but later turned a blind eye. He was never paid by the company. Read a [news story](#).

<https://www.augustachronicle.com/news/20191023/ohio-man-pleads-guilty-in-augusta-area-medicaidmedicare-fraud-case>

Missouri Woman Indicted for Social Security Fraud, Identity Theft

December 10, 2019

Springfield MO —A woman, currently a fugitive, has been indicted by a federal grand jury for a Social Security fraud scheme that utilized the stolen identity information of another person. She is charged with three counts of intentionally furnishing false information to the Social Security Administration to receive a Social Security card; one count of the false representation of a Social Security number used in a student account promissory note submitted to an educational institution, and four counts of aggravated identity theft, using stolen identity information of another person.

https://oig.ssa.gov/audits-and-investigations/investigations/dec10-mo-fraud-identity-theft?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery

OIG Doubled Last Year’s Expected Recoveries

American taxpayers could see nearly \$5.9 billion in misspent Medicare, Medicaid, and other Health & Human Services (HHS) program dollars returned to the government as the result of fiscal year 2019 work by the HHS Office of Inspector General (OIG), according to the Semiannual Report to Congress. Approximately \$5.04 billion is expected from investigative. Read a [news story](#). Read an [OIG press release](#).

<https://oig.hhs.gov/newsroom/news-releases/2019/sar.asp#main-content>

United States Files False Claims Act Complaint against Community Health Network

January 7, 2020

Indiana —Community Health Network Inc. (Community), an integrated health care system in central Indiana, is alleged to have violated the Stark Law and thereby submitted false claims to the Medicare program. The government complaint alleges that Community had employment relationships with a number of physicians that did not meet any Stark Law exception because the compensation Community paid to the physicians was well above fair market value and because Community conditioned paying bonuses on physicians achieving a minimum target of referral revenues to the hospital. The complaint alleges that Community received referrals from these physicians in violation of the Stark Law and submitted claims to Medicare knowing that the claims for those referred services were not eligible for payment.

Source: <https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/united-states-files-false-claims-act-complaint-against-community-health-network>

SMP’s PERSONAL HEALTH CARE JOURNAL (PHCJ) is used to keep track of your doctor appointments, medications and durable medical equipment. This is a valuable tool used for comparing claims on your Medicare Summary Notice to your notes taken while at your doctor visit. It is also a 2020 calendar!

Please call for your *free copy!*
866-726-2916

SOMETHING YOU SHOULD KNOW!

When dating legal documents, write out the full year when writing the date. Instead of “1/1/20,” writing “1/1/2020” will prevent people from adding numerals to the end, changing the date to “1/1/2019” or “1/1/2021.”

The last time the first two digits and the last two digits were the same was 101 years ago, in 1919.

Protect yourself! DO NOT ABBREVIATE 2020!

Abbreviating the date gives scammers the opportunity to alter it by adding on two numbers at the end.

Be aware of **SCAM(s)**:

Report all scams to the Arkansas SMP — **1-866-726-2916**

FREE GENETIC TESTING SCAM—

Beware of a Growing Medicare Scam:
“Free Genetic Testing”

By Rebecca Kinney, Acting Director, Office of Healthcare Information and Counseling, ACL

Over the past few years, DNA tests have become popular across the country. Unfortunately unscrupulous people are taking advantage of the buzz around these tests to scam Medicare beneficiaries.

Scammers will often target Medicare beneficiaries through telemarketing calls, booths at public events, health fairs, and door-to-door visits. They offer “free” genetic testing to help recipients avoid diseases or find the right medications.

The scammers claim that the testing is covered by Medicare, and therefore is free to the beneficiary. In reality, Medicare only covers genetic testing in limited situations, and only when ordered by the beneficiary’s physician. If a company bills Medicare for genetic testing, and Medicare denies the claim, the beneficiary could be responsible for the entire cost of the test – which often totals around \$10,000.

In other cases, the scammers are simply trying to obtain Medicare numbers they can use to steal a beneficiary’s medical identity or to fraudulently bill Medicare for services they did not provide. Such fraud hurts not just Medicare beneficiaries, but all American tax payers whose contributions keep Medicare strong.

The Administration for Community Living (ACL) offers this advice to avoid being scammed:

- Do not accept genetic testing services, including a cheek swab, from someone at a community event, a local fair, a farmer’s market, a parking lot, or any other large event.
- Always be cautious about giving out your personal information, including your Medicare number.
- If you receive a genetic testing kit in the mail, don’t accept it unless it was ordered by your physician. Refuse the delivery or return it to the sender and keep a record of the sender’s name and the date you returned the items.
- Always review your Medicare Summary Notice or Explanation of Benefits. The words “gene analysis” or “molecular pathology” may indicate questionable genetic testing.

If you received a cheek swab or a screening that was not ordered by a trusted provider, or have any concerns about billing errors or possible fraud, contact your local Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) at 866-726-2916 The SMP program, funded by the U.S. Administration for Community Living, helps Medicare beneficiaries protect themselves from Medicare fraud, errors, and abuse and detect and report them when they occur.

More resources:

- Department of Justice announcement September 27, 2019: [Federal Law Enforcement Action Involving Fraudulent Genetic Testing Results in Charges Against 35 Individuals Responsible for Over \\$2.1 Billion in Losses in One of the Largest Health Care Fraud Schemes Ever Charged](#)
- HHS Office of the Inspector General Media Materials: [Nationwide Genetic Testing Fraud](#)
- HHS Office of the Inspector General Fraud Alert: [Genetic Testing Scam](#)

The Social Security Administration (SSA) Imposter Scam

The SSA scam is the number one scam reported to the FTC right now.

As soon as a caller threatens you, or demands you pay them with a gift card or by wiring money, it’s a scam. Even if the caller ID tells you otherwise.

If you get a call from someone claiming to be from the Social Security Administration, hang up the phone and remember:

- Your Social Security number is not about to be suspended.

- The real Social Security Administration will never call to threaten your benefits.

- The real SSA will never tell you to wire money, send cash, or put money on a gift card.

Watch [this video](#) to see how scammers use threats and high-pressure tactics to try to con you.

Learning about scams makes them much easier to avoid. If you’ve received a call like this, tell your friends, family and neighbors about it. Tell them to hang up the phone and to report it to the Federal Trade Commission.

REPORT SUSPECTED MEDICAID FRAUD to the AR MEDICAID INSPECTOR GENERAL (OMIG) HOTLINE— 855-527-6644; or online: <http://omig.arkansas.gov>

Upcoming Arkansas SMP Activities

DATE	ACTIVITY	COUNTY
January 8	SMP Presentation—Country Club Village—Hot Springs AR	Garland
January 15	SMP Presentation—N.A.R.F.E. Chapter 93—Fletcher Library—LR	Pulaski
January 16	SMP Presentation—First Baptist Church—Maumelle	Pulaski
January 23	SMP Presentation—Lunch & Learn—Woodland Heights Retirement Community—LR	Pulaski
January 28	SMP Fraud Bingo—Christopher Homes—Jonesboro	Craighead
February 10	SMP Fraud Bingo —Worley's Place—Jacksonville	Pulaski
March 10	SMP Advisory Council Meeting—LR	Pulaski
March 13	HOPE for the FUTURE Exhibit Booth—Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church—LR	Pulaski
April 15	KABF 88.3FM Radio—"It Could Happen to You"—Live Radio SMP segment 2pm—LR	Pulaski
April 17	SMP Presentation—Alzheimer's AR Lunch & Learn—The Atrium—Hot Springs	Garland
April 23	SMP Presentation—Lunch & Learn—Woodland Heights Retirement Community—LR	Pulaski
June 9	SMP Presentation—P.E.O. of Pine Bluff—Pine Bluff	Jefferson
June 12	SMP Presentation / Exhibit Booth—HOPE for the FUTURE—National Park College—Hot Springs	Garland
June 16	SMP Advisory Council Meeting—LR	Pulaski
July 10	SMP Presentation / Exhibit Booth—HOPE for the FUTURE—Jonesboro	Craighead
July 16	SMP Presentation—Lunch & Learn—Woodland Heights Retirement Community—LR	Pulaski
July 20-23	NATIONAL SMP/SHIP CONFERENCE—Maryland	Out of State
August 14	SMP Presentation / Exhibit Booth—HOPE for the FUTURE—Activity Center—Rogers	Washington
September 11	SMP Presentation / Exhibit Booth—HOPE for the FUTURE—Civic Center—Marianna	Lee
September 15	SMP Advisory Council Meeting—LR	Pulaski
October 9	SMP Presentation / Exhibit Booth—HOPE for the FUTURE—Magnolia	Columbia
October 22	SMP/SHIP Presentation—Lunch & Learn—Woodland Heights —LR	Pulaski
November 13	SMP Presentation / Exhibit Booth — HOPE for the FUTURE—Russellville	Pope
December 9	SMP 10th Annual Volunteer Appreciation & Update Training	Pulaski

We would welcome any opportunity to present the SMP message statewide.
Please contact the Arkansas SMP to schedule a presentation in your area at
1-866-726-2916.



www.facebook.com/arsmp

"To make full use of longer lives, we need to radically change our thinking about how we live our lives from beginning to end. We cannot achieve what we cannot envision."

— Laura Carstensen, Director, Stanford Center on Longevity

Source: <http://longevity.stanford.edu/a-new-map-of-life/>

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS:

AANHR—AR Advocates for Nursing Home Residents **501-607-8976**
AFMC—AR Foundation for Medical Care **1-888-354-9100**
Area Agency on Aging **1-800-986-3505**
AG—Attorney General (Consmr Prot Div) **1-800-482-8982**
AG Medicaid Fraud Hotline **1-866-810-0016**
APS—Adult Protective Services (DHS) **1-800-482-8049**
Arkansas Rehabilitation Services **1-800-981-4463**
AR SMP (Healthcare Fraud Complaints) **1-866-726-2916**
Better Business Bureau (BBB) **501-664-7274**
CMS—(Medicare)— (Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services)
(**1-800MEDICARE**) **1-800-633-4227**
Community Health Centers of AR **1-877-666-2422**
Coordination of Benefits **1-855-798-2627**
DHS (Customer Assistance Unit) **1-800-482-8988**
DHS Resource Center **1-866-801-3435**
Do Not Call Registry **1-888-382-1222**
Elder Care Locator **1-800-677-1116**
El Dorado RSVP **1-870-864-7080**
Federal Trade Commission
Report **STOLEN IDENTITY** **1-877-438-4338**
ICan—Increasing Capabilities Access Network **501-666-8868**
KEPRO -AR QIO(Quality Improvmnt Org.) **1-844-430-9504**
LGBT Elder Hotline **888-234-SAGE**
Medicaid—(Claims Unit) **1-800-482-5431**
Medicaid Inspector General (OMIG) **1-855-527-6644**
MEDICARE (CMS 1-800MEDICARE) **1-800-633-4227**
Medicare Part D **1-877-772-3379**
Medicare Rights Center **1-800-333-4114**
Mid-Delta Community Consortium **1-870-407-9000**
Oaklawn Foundation/Center on Aging **501-623-0020**
OIG-Nat'l Medicare Fraud Hotline **1-800-HHS-TIPS**
(OIG) Office of Inspector General **1-800-447-8477**
OLTC—Office of Long Term Care **1-800-LTC-4887**
OLTC—Abuse Complaint Section **501-682-8430**
Ombudsman—State Ofc of Long Term Care **501-682-8952**
Resource Center (ADRC) **1-866-801-3435**
(DHS'S Choices in Living Resource Center)
RSVP of Central Arkansas **501-897-0793**
SHIIP (Senior Health Ins. Info Program) **1-800-224-6330**
SMP Locator—(locate an SMP outside AR) **1-877-808-2468**
SSA (Social Security Administration) **1-800-772-1213**
Little Rock Office **1-866-593-0933**
SSA Fraud Hotline **1-800-269-0271**
South Central Center on Aging **1-866-895-2795**
South East AR Center on Aging **1-870-673-8584**
Texarkana Regional Center on Aging **1-870-773-2030**
Tri-County Rural Health Network **1-870-338-8900**
UALR Senior Justice Center **501-683-7153**
UofA Cooperative Extension Service **501-671-2000**

HELPFUL WEBSITES:

ADRC—AR Aging & Disability Resource Center (DHS)—
www.choicesinliving.ar.gov/
AR Advocates for Nursing Home Residents
(AANHR)—www.aanhr.org; e-mail: Info@aanhr.org
AR Long Term Care Ombudsman Program—
www.arombudsman.com
Arkansas Aging Initiative—<http://aging.uams.edu/?id=4605&sid=6>
Arkansas Attorney General—www.arkansasag.gov
Arkansas Attorney General Consumer Protection
Division—e-mail: consumer@ag.state.ar.us
Area Agencies on Aging—www.daas.ar.gov/aaamap.html
Arkansas Foundation for Medical Care—www.afmc.org
Arkansas SMP—www.daas.ar.gov/asmp.html
BBB (Better Business Bureau)—scams and alerts—
<https://www.bbb.org/scamtracker/arkansas/>
CMS (Medicare) Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services—
www.cms.hhs.gov
Do Not Call—www.donotcall.gov
Do Not Mail—www.DMAchoice.org
Elder Tree / Spinsterhaven—Spinsterhaven@gmail.com
Elder Care Locator—www.eldercare.gov
H.E.A.T—www.stopmedicarefraud.gov/
(Healthcare Fraud Prevention and Enforcement Action Team)
LGBT—National Resource Center on LGBT Aging
<https://www.lgbtagingcenter.org/about/updatesProcess.cfm>
MEDICAID—www.Medicaid.gov
MEDICAID INSPECTOR GENERAL (OMIG)—
<http://omig.arkansas.gov/fraud-form>
MEDICARE—www.medicare.gov
Medicare Interactive Counselor—
www.medicareinteractive.org
Hospital Compare—www.hospitalcompare.hhs.gov
MyMedicare.gov—www.mymedicare.gov
(Access to your personal Medicare claims information)
MyMedicareMatters.org (National Council on Aging)
Office of Long Term Care—[http://](http://humanservices.arkansas.gov/dms/Pages/oltcHome.aspx)
humanservices.arkansas.gov/dms/Pages/oltcHome.aspx
Office of Inspector General (OIG)—email:
HHSTips@oig.hhs.gov
Pharmaceutical Assistance Program—
medicare.gov/pap/index.asp
Physician Compare—www.medicare.gov/find-a-doctor
SMP Locator—SMPResource.org (locate an SMP outside of AR)
Social Security Administration (SSA)—www.ssa.gov
SSA OIG—Report SS Fraud—<https://oig.ssa.gov/report>
TAP—www.arsinfo.org (Telecommunications Access Program)
UofA Cooperative Extension Service—www.uaex.edu



SENIOR MEDICARE PATROL (SMP) MISSION

“To empower and assist Medicare beneficiaries, their families, and caregivers to prevent, detect, and report health care fraud, error, and abuse through outreach, counseling, and education.”



TO PREVENT HEALTHCARE FRAUD—

Protect Personal Information

- * Treat Medicare/Medicaid and Social Security numbers like credit card numbers.
- * Remember, Medicare will not call or make personal visits to sell anything!
- * READ and SAVE Medicare Summary Notices (MSN) and Part D Explanation of benefits (EOB), but **shred** before discarding.

Detect Errors, Fraud, and Abuse

- * Always review MSN and EOB for mistakes.
- * Compare them with your Personal Health Care Journal.
- * Visit **www.mymedicare.gov** to access your personal account online to look for charges for something you did not get, billing for the same thing more than once, and services that were not ordered and/or you never received.

Report Mistakes or Questions

- * If you suspect errors, fraud, or abuse, report it immediately! Call your provider or plan **first**.
- * If you are not satisfied with their response, call the Arkansas SMP.

TO RECRUIT & TRAIN VOLUNTEERS—

- * Retired seniors;
- * Retired health-care providers; or
- * Retired professionals, e.g., teachers, accountants, attorneys, investigators, nurses.

To receive the **Arkansas SMP Newsletter** electronically
email: kathleen.pursell@dhs.arkansas.gov

Current and archived newsletters available at:

<https://humanservices.arkansas.gov/about-dhs/daabhs/asmp/smp-newsletter-archive>

AR SMP PARTNERS

El Dorado Connections RSVP
El Dorado, AR
870-864-7080

RSVP of Central Arkansas
Little Rock, AR
501-897-0793

Oaklawn Foundation
Hot Springs, AR
501-623-0020

Spinsterhaven
Fayetteville, AR
Spinsterhaven@gmail.com

Tri County Rural Health Network
Helena, AR
870-338-8900

**Texarkana Regional
Center on Aging**
Texarkana, AR
870-773-2030

South Central Center on Aging
Pine Bluff, AR
870-879-1440

South East Arkansas RSVP
Pine Bluff and Stuttgart, AR
870-673-8584

**Senior Health Insurance
Information Program (SHIIP)**
Little Rock, AR
800-224-6330



Arkansas Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP)

P. O. Box 1437 Slot W241

Little Rock, AR 72203-1437

FACEBOOK.COM/ARSMP

<https://humanservices.arkansas.gov/about-dhs/daabhs/asmp>

To Report Medicare Fraud, Waste & Abuse
Call the Toll-Free **Helpline** 8:00am—4:30pm
1-866-726-2916