

# Hospice Care & Medicare Fraud



## What is Medicare Hospice Fraud?

Hospice is an important benefit for the Medicare population. Hospice fraud threatens this benefit for all beneficiaries. Scammers are getting beneficiaries to agree to hospice care even though they do not qualify for the benefit. **Hospice fraud occurs when Medicare Part A is falsely billed for any level of hospice care.**

## What are Examples of Hospice Fraud?

- Falsely certifying and providing services to beneficiaries who are not terminally ill – that is, with a life expectancy of six months or less.
- Enrolling in hospice without the permission of the patient or family.
- Falsely certifying or failing to obtain physician certification on plans of care.
- Paying gifts or incentives to referral sources (Ex: physicians, nursing homes).
- Billing for a higher level of care than was needed or provided or for services not received.
- Targeting assisted living facility and/or nursing home residents whose life expectancy exceeds six months and using high-pressure & unsolicited marketing tactics of hospice services
- Embezzling, abusing, or neglecting beneficiaries or medication theft by a hospice worker
- Keeping a beneficiary on hospice care for long periods of time without medical justification
- Providing less care on the weekends - disregarding a beneficiary's care plan.

**CALL the NYS Senior Medicare Patrol at 1-800-333-4374**



**STATE  WIDE**

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## How are Scammers Benefitting from Hospice Fraud?

- General inpatient care and continuous home care **pay significantly more** than routine home care.
- **Falsely signing** someone up for hospice and then **providing routine home care at a continuous home care rate** could be very lucrative for a fraudster.

What Medicare Paid for Hospice Care in 2021*		
Routine Home Care	General Inpatient Care	Continuous Home Care
\$199.25 per day for 1-60 days	\$1,045.66 per day	\$1,432.41 per day
\$157.49 per day for days 61+		

## What Can You do Stop Hospice Fraud?

- Be sure **your doctor** has assessed your condition.
- Be sure your doctor has certified **that you are terminally ill and expected to live six months or less** if the disease runs its normal course.
- **Never accept gifts** (such as money, gift cards, or groceries) in return for hospice services and be wary of “too-good-to-be-true” offers.
- **Report quality-of-care complaints to the NYS SMP Helpline (800-333-4374)** and the Beneficiary and Family Centered Care-Quality Improvement Organization (BFCC-QIO) - in NYS: **Livanta (866-815-5440)**.

\*Medicare program: FY 2022 Hospice Wage Index and Payment Rate Update, Hospice Conditions of Participation Updates, Hospice and Home Health Quality Reporting Program Requirements 2021, 147 Red. Reg. 42528 Page 16, 17 (August 4, 2021)

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