

SMP MONTHLY

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Pictured L to R: Senator Rachel May, Board President Mario Henry and Executive Director Maria Alvarez

REMINDERS



Join us for the
SMP Volunteer
Meeting on Oct. 21, 2022
at 11:00 AM.

- To join by computer
Click [HERE](#)
- To join by phone dial
646-558-8656, Meeting
ID: 533 682 2516

Hi everyone,

We just got back from our **50th Anniversary Convention and Gala** in Saratoga Springs and it was a huge success! Kathleen Otte, CMS Regional Director & Rhonda Schwartz, ACL Region II Administrator kicked off the meeting with a “View from Washington.” Other highlights included Keynote Speaker Mary T. Bassett, NYS Health Commissioner and visits from Assemblymember Richard Gottfried and Senator Rachel May. Since many of you were not able to attend, we can share powerpoints and fact sheets with you. Take a look at the [schedule](#) and let us know if there is a topic that you would like to learn more about.



September is Healthcare Fraud Prevention and Awareness Month, and as SMP members, we want to take time to educate others on the [types of Medicare fraud](#), the importance of [reviewing your latest MSN and/or EOB](#) and sharing our HELPLINE with our friends and loved ones.

This month, we will also take a closer look at Hospice Fraud - examples and what we can do to stop it. Looking forward to seeing everyone at our next meeting on Friday, Oct. 21 at 11 AM.

- The SMP Team



The flu can be very serious for people 65 years and older.

The best way to protect yourself is to get the flu shot.

It's covered by Medicare, so you pay nothing out-of-pocket.

For more information and related resources, click [HERE](#).

[Flu Shots Coverage \(medicare.gov\)](#)

Medicare Fraud Helpline 800-333-4374

What is Medicare Hospice Fraud?

- Hospice fraud occurs when Medicare Part A is falsely billed for any level of hospice care or service.

What are some 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 if the disease runs its normal course.
- Enrolling in hospice without the knowledge or permission of the patient or family.
- Falsely certifying or failing to obtain physician certification on plans of care.
- 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 and unsolicited marketing tactics of hospice services.



Hospice Fraud Examples (cont.)

- Providing/offering gifts or incentives, including noncovered benefits such as housekeeping or delivery services to encourage beneficiaries to elect hospice even though they may not be terminally ill.
- Embezzling, abusing, or neglecting beneficiaries or medication theft by a hospice worker.
- Providing less care on the weekends and disregarding a beneficiary's care plan.

What Can You Do to 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 in return for hospice services** or “too good to be true” offers.

For more information on Hospice Fraud, visit [SMP Consumer Fraud Alert: Hospice](#)



Meet Outreach Counselor Alex Lauer

Alex grew up in Genesee County and is currently a proud resident of Buffalo. She graduated from Wells College in Aurora, New York with a degree in English Literature and a minor in Secondary Education before pursuing graduate studies at Dalhousie University in Nova Scotia. Alex has worked in nonprofits and local government for over 10 years and is passionate about serving and advocating for seniors and families. She most recently worked with the Erie County Department of Senior Services and has previously worked with military Veterans and caregivers.

The NYS Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) can help you with your questions, concerns, or complaints about potential fraud issues. Please call the NYS SMP at 800-333-4374.

