

PHARMACY & PRESCRIPTION DRUG FRAUD



Pharmacy and Prescription Drug Fraud occurs when Medicare is billed for a medication that was not received or a beneficiary is intentionally given a different prescription drug than prescribed. Here are some examples of Pharmacy/Prescription Drug Fraud:

BILLING MEDICARE FOR -

- Prescription drugs (including refills) that were never picked up, delivered, or even prescribed.
- Prescription drugs (occasionally controlled substances such as opioids) that were prescribed by a health care provider you have never seen.
- Medication amounts beyond the quantity you were prescribed.
- Different prescription drug (often more expensive) than the one you were originally prescribed or issuing you a drug that is not approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

IF YOUR PHARMACY -

- Intentionally provides less medication than prescribed or issues expired drugs.
- Provides and bills for an expensive compounded medication, including topical pain creams, when a less expensive prescription was ordered by your provider.
- Offers gift cards or other compensation so you switch your prescriptions over to a specific pharmacy.
- Automatically refills a prescription you no longer need. You do not pick up the prescription but the pharmacy still bills Medicare.



PHARMACY & PRESCRIPTION DRUG FRAUD



HOW ARE FRAUDSTERS BENEFITING FROM PHARMACY/PRESCRIPTION DRUG FRAUD?

- Criminals, ranging from health care providers to drug trafficking organizations, continue to commit prescription drug fraud because it is profitable. Unfortunately, there is a strong illegal market for prescription drugs – including controlled drugs such as opioids and expensive prescriptions such as autoimmune medications like Xeljanz.
- Some prescription drugs are targeted because they can be combined with recreational and illegal drugs to enhance a high or hallucinogenic effect.

PROTECT YOURSELF

- **Be sure your doctor has assessed your condition** before prescribing you medication.
- **Do not give out your Medicare number** or other personal information to unknown individuals requesting it for prescription drug services.
- Be suspicious of unsolicited calls and **offers for “free” or “discount” prescription drugs.**
- **Read your Medicare Summary Notice (MSN) or Explanation of Benefits (EOB)** to watch for the names of unknown providers and billing of prescriptions and other services you did not receive.
- If you notice a **charge to your Medicare drug plan for prescriptions you did not receive (or for different drugs than the ones you were prescribed)**, report your concerns about possible fraud, errors, or abuse to the NYS Senior Medicare Patrol.

The NYS SMP can help you with questions, concerns, or complaints about potential fraud and abuse issues. We also provide educational materials and presentations. Call 800-333-4374, or visit www.nysenior.org for more information.



This project was supported, in part by grant number 90MPPG0010-01-00, from the U.S. Administration for Community Living, Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, D.C. 20201.