

HELLO  SPRING!

REMINDERS



Join us for the SMP
Volunteer Meeting on
April 21 at 11:00 AM.

Topic:

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

Hello,

Spring has arrived and with it, a new issue of our SMP Volunteer newsletter! Here are some updates and news to keep you informed:

- **Fraud of the Month: Pharmacy and Prescription Drug Fraud.**
Due to the profitable nature of prescription drug diversion and pharmacy scams, criminals continue to exploit Medicare Part D. In this newsletter and our upcoming volunteer meeting, we'll explore this type of fraud and how to stop it.
- **New Partnerships:** Two more organizations—Neighborhood Shopp (Bronx) and RAICES (Brooklyn) recently completed SMP Foundations Training with their volunteers. Congratulations!
- **Volunteer Spotlight:** This month we highlight new volunteer Judith Fonti from the Staten Island JCC. Judith has extensive experience in marketing research, hospice volunteering and medical supply management. View her bio on page 2.
- **Opportunities for involvement:** As always, we welcome your ideas and involvement. Whether you want to present, attend a tabling event, help with a mailing or simply share your feedback, we value your input and support.



Thank you for being a part of our SMP Volunteer Team and for your commitment to making a difference. Our next meeting will be April 21, at 11:00 AM. See you there!

MEDICARE CARDS

Please share this information with others in your community:

- Guard your Medicare card and number like a credit card.
- Never advise people to make copies (or pay others to make copies) of their Medicare cards, or to laminate their card.
- For beneficiaries who have an Account at Medicare.gov, they can easily print or order an official replacement card, if their original card is lost or damaged.
- If you need a replacement card, you can also call 1-800-MEDICARE.

Protect your Medicare card and Medicare Number by only sharing your information with health care providers, insurance companies or health plans (and their licensed agents or brokers), or people that you trust.

Medicare Fraud Helpline 800-333-4374

Prescription Drug/Pharmacy Fraud

Although there are many types of prescription drug schemes, **pharmacy fraud primarily 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 a few examples:

- Billing Medicare for prescription drugs (including refills) that were never picked up, delivered, or prescribed.
- Billing Medicare for a different prescription drug (often more expensive) than the one you were originally prescribed or issuing you a drug that is not approved by the FDA.
- A pharmacy intentionally provides less medication than prescribed or issues expired drugs.
- A company offers “free” or “discount” prescription drugs without a treating physician’s order and then billing Medicare.
- A pharmacy offers gift cards so you switch your prescriptions over to a specific pharmacy.
- A pharmacy automatically refills a prescription you no longer need. You do not pick up the prescription but the pharmacy still bills Medicare.



What You Can Do to Stop Pharmacy Fraud

- Be sure your doctor has assessed your condition before prescribing you any medication.
- Don’t give out your Medicare number or other personal information to unknown individuals requesting it for prescription drug services.
- Always read your MSN to watch for the names of unknown providers and billing of prescriptions and other services you did not receive.
- **Report your concerns about possible fraud, errors, or abuse to the NYS SMP 800-333-4374.**

SMP Volunteer Spotlight



Hi, my name is Judith Fonti and I am one of the new volunteers for the NYS SMP at the Staten Island JCC. I come from a corporate background in marketing research for 37 years.



I retired in 1995 and became a hospice volunteer, giving me insight into both nursing homes and at home care. I went back to work part time for a durable medical supply company as their respiratory office manager opening another window into both the insurance world and Medicare practices.

After 4 1/2 years, I went to work for a 7 doctor pulmonary practice as their insurance, test authorization and durable medical equipment manager. I was able to see all aspects of the things that SMP is making seniors aware of that they may have no knowledge of.

There are many pitfalls and confusing red tape as well as prevalent fraud we, as seniors, have to be aware of and navigate everyday. The SMP is allowing me to go out and educate the public on these issues, giving me the knowledge, training, tools and a team of experts in all fields standing behind me and mentoring me.

My hope is to reach seniors and let them know that we are with an outstretched hand. Just reach for it. You are not alone.

- Judith Fonti, SMP Volunteer, JCC Staten Island



The SMP program is celebrating its 25 Year Anniversary!
Curious about the history of the program?

[CLICK HERE and use the interactive timeline to learn more.](#)



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