

SMP MONTHLY

ISSUE NO. 43 | AUG 2023 |



REMINDERS



Join us for the SMP
Volunteer Meeting on
October 20 at 11:00 AM.

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

Hello,

Welcome to the August edition of the NYS Senior Medicare Patrol Newsletter. With temperatures soaring and heatwaves common, finding respite from the heat is a top priority. During such hot conditions, going outdoors might not be comfortable for older adults, especially those at a higher risk. **This is where telehealth steps in as an efficient and convenient alternative.**

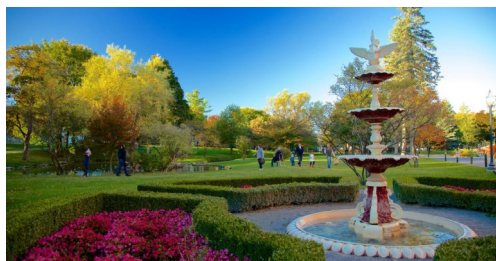
In this edition we focus on the importance of telehealth and also **raising our awareness of telehealth fraud that targets Medicare beneficiaries** (see page 2)

We also want to remind all volunteers that our Annual Convention is September 11–13 in beautiful Saratoga Springs! If you are interested in coming to convention, please reach out to Joan Akpan. Email: joan@nysenior.org.

For more information on convention you can also visit our website nysenior.org or click on the flyer/registration buttons (below).



Stay cool and connected!



Congress Park in Saratoga Springs

Important Information about Telehealth and Telehealth Fraud

- [The Basics of Telehealth \(hhs.gov\)](https://www.hhs.gov)
- [Telehealth | HHS-OIG](#)

CMS CONTRACTOR DATA BREACH

- Center for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS) is notifying potentially involved beneficiaries and providing information on free credit monitoring
- [Press Release](#)—A sample letter is included in the press release and will be **mailed to approximately 612,000 beneficiaries.**

Medicare Fraud Helpline 800-333-4374

Telehealth Fraud



Telehealth - sometimes called telemedicine - lets your health care provider care for you without an in-person office visit. Telehealth is done primarily online with internet access on your computer, tablet, or smartphone. Through telehealth platforms, patients can:

- consult with healthcare professionals
- access mental health services
- receive medical advice
- obtain prescriptions

However, with the expansion of telehealth there is always those looking to exploit it for their gain. Telehealth fraud has been on the rise, targeting vulnerable individuals, including seniors. Scammers may attempt to impersonate healthcare providers or offer fake telehealth services to steal personal and financial information. They might promise free consultations, offer unnecessary medical tests, or sell counterfeit medications, with the intention of defrauding Medicare beneficiaries.

Be Scam Smart



Verify the Provider: Before engaging in any telehealth appointment, verify the credentials of the healthcare provider.

Protect Personal Information: Never share your personal, Medicare, or financial information unless you are confident about the legitimacy of the telehealth service.

Be Wary of "Free" Services: Scammers often lure victims with promises of free services. Be skeptical and thoroughly research any service before participating.

Research Medications: If a telehealth provider prescribes medication, research it and cross-check with your primary healthcare provider.

Secure Platforms: When participating in telehealth sessions, ensure that the platform being used is secure and encrypted to protect your privacy.

Review Your Statements:

Regularly review your MSN and EOB to identify unauthorized charges or services. Look out for out of state providers and report discrepancies to the NYS SMP.



Report Suspicious Activity: If you suspect telehealth fraud, report it immediately. You can contact the Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) program at 800-333-4374.

WE'RE IN THE NEWS!

- [Negotiating Medicare drug prices will change lives. Guest Opinion by Nora OBrien-Suric & Maria Alvarez; \(Syracuse.com, 8/4\)](#)
- [Portage woman reports Medicare scam involving COVID-19 tests, \(The Tribune Democrat, 7/27\)](#)
- [Fraud Alert: Watch Out for New Medicare Scams \(newmax.com, 7/27\)](#)

