

SMP MONTHLY

ISSUE NO. 45 | OCT 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!

It's that time of year again! **Medicare Open Enrollment runs from OCT 15 through DEC 7.** During this period, beneficiaries have the opportunity to assess and adjust their Medicare coverage for the upcoming year. However, it's also a time when scammers become more active.



In our October Fight Fraud Toolkit and on page 2 of this newsletter, we provide you with information on how to spot Open Enrollment Fraud. As volunteers, you play a crucial role in safeguarding our communities, and we encourage you to stay well-informed about the latest SMP news and fraud updates.

Should you encounter any suspicious activity or have questions during Open Enrollment, please don't hesitate to contact us. Your insights and experiences are invaluable to our mission of protecting seniors during this busy period.

We also introduce you to Beth Nivin, our featured volunteer in the October spotlight. Beth's background and contributions to the SMP program are inspiring, and we are thrilled that she joined our team.

We are looking forward to seeing everyone at our next SMP Volunteer ZOOM Meeting on October 20, at 11 AM.

Our strength lies in our community of dedicated volunteers, and what better way to grow and share knowledge than by inviting a **friend to join us in our SMP mission?**



Extend an invite to a friend today!

UPCOMING TEACH INS

Save the Dates for our Upcoming Webinar Teach ins:

- **OCT 31:** Conversation with Rhonda Schwartz, Regional Administrator for the Administration for Community Living (ACL).
- **NOV 21:** Successes in Prosecuting Healthcare Fraud, Christopher Moran, Assistant US Attorney

Medicare Fraud Helpline 800-333-4374

Keep an Eye Out for Scammers During Open Enrollment!



As you look for your best health coverage options, don't forget to keep an eye open for fraudsters! Watch out for people who:

- Claim they work with Medicare or are an "official Medicare agent". There are no Medicare representatives & Medicare will never cold-call you.
- Say you must join a Medicare prescription plan (also known as Part D). It is voluntary to join a Medicare prescription drug plan.
- Ask for personal information, such as your Medicare number, Social Security number and/or bank information.
- Threaten or pressure you to enroll in their plan. You will not lose your benefits and have the entire Open Enrollment Period to make a decision
- Offer you gifts more than \$15 to enroll in their plan.



If you or anyone you know suspects their Medicare number has been compromised or they've been enrolled in a plan without their permission contact the NYS SMP at 800-333-4374.

ARTICLES ON ENROLLMENT FRAUD

- [Brace Yourself for a Barrage of Commercials](https://smpresource.org) (smpresource.org, 10/23)
- [Feds Crack Down on Misleading Advantage Marketing](#) (4/23)



Volunteer Spotlight: Beth Nivin



I have always done some sort of volunteer work starting in high school. One of my proudest achievements was being in the

Peace Corps as a Tuberculosis Control Officer in Botswana. I took a break from volunteering while I worked full time at the NYC Dept. of Health, raised my children and welcomed grandchildren. Once I retired in 2018 I looked for volunteer activities that focused on children and seniors. I became a long-term care ombudsman for a few years and then looked for other opportunities. Being part of the SMP involves talking to seniors about their health, which is similar to the work I did at DOH.

I attended this year's conference and was so impressed by how articulate people were about issues directly affecting our healthcare that I was compelled to become a member of StateWide and register for the legislative training (SLAT). I have never approached elected officials in an advocacy role so I look forward to getting out of my comfort zone.



Beth Nivin volunteers with the JCC in Staten Island NY.

[If you are also interested in joining StateWide's Legislative training, view the flyer HERE.](#)