

FRAUD ALERT



Friday February 3, 2012

Please share this Fraud Alert with colleagues, consumers, or other professionals in your area. If you have any questions about the Illinois SMP program, or to receive these Fraud Alerts directly, please contact Erin Weir, Healthcare Consumer Protection Coordinator at AgeOptions.

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Fraud In The News

The following are current news articles about health care and fraud issues.

Consumer Fraud:

1. "Time Share Marketing Scams" (F.B.I. Warning): http://www.fbi.gov/scams-safety/e-scams?utm_campaign=email-Weekly&utm_content=65935

Dear SMP readers,

This week's Fraud Alert contains information about insurance marketing issues, a new Spanish SMP PowerPoint presentation on durable medical equipment fraud, an announcement about a radio show on scams featuring Cherie Aschenbrenner of the Elgin Police Department, and an F.B.I. webpage about scams and senior citizens.

Have a great weekend!

What you will find in this week's Fraud Alert

- Insurance Agent Marketing Issues in Rock Island
- Durable Medical Equipment Fraud Presentation in Spanish
- Elgin TRIAD Officer Speaks About Scams on Radio Show
- F.B.I. Resource on Fraud and Senior Citizens

Insurance Agent Marketing Issues in Rock Island

One of our SMP program coordinators in Rock Island, Illinois recently shared information about insurance agents who are breaking Medicare's insurance plan marketing rules. The insurance agents are working with a man who says that he works for "Circuit Breaker Services." This man and the two insurance agents go to senior buildings to do Circuit Breaker applications for residents. While they are working with the residents, the insurance agents also convince the residents to enroll in a particular Medicare Advantage plan. Many of the residents that they have been enrolling in this plan are "dual eligibles" (on both Medicare and Medicaid), and they end up having problems accessing services under this plan. Residents have also complained that the insurance agents keep visiting them door to door until they enroll in the plan, and one person says that the man working with the agents "screamed and yelled" at her.

These agents are breaking several of Medicare's rules for Medicare marketing. First, insurance agents are NOT allowed to market Medicare Advantage plans door-to-door or via educational events. They are not allowed to lie (i.e., claim to be there to help with Circuit Breaker applications) to get people to enroll in a plan, and they are not allowed to harass people or scare them into enrolling in a plan.

If anyone has experienced issues like this, please report them to the Illinois SMP program at AgeOptions – (800)699-9043.

2. "AARP Scam Alert:
Missing Dot in Email
Address Could Be a
Costly Mistake":

http://www.aarp.org/money/scams-fraud/info-09-2011/email-address-mistake-scam-alert.html?cmp=NLC-WBLTR-CTRL-012012-FT2-86&USEG_ID=0

Durable Medical Equipment Fraud Presentation in Spanish

The Illinois SMP PowerPoint presentation on Durable Medical Equipment (DME) and fraud is now available in Spanish. You can download this presentation, along with all of our other educational materials, on our website – www.illinoismp.org. Simply click on "Illinois SMP Materials" to access our Materials page.

Elgin TRIAD Officer Speaks About Scams on Radio Show

Cherie Aschenbrenner, an Elgin police officer who runs the Elgin TRIAD program (a community partnership among local police, senior services, and older adults), was recently interviewed for a radio show about current scams affecting seniors. The show will air this Saturday, February 4th on WIND 560 AM at 6:00 a.m. The show streams live online at www.560WIND.com, and it will be archived as a podcast shortly after it airs on www.AgingInfoRadio.com.

F.B.I. Resource on Fraud and Senior Citizens

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (F.B.I.) has useful information on their website about a variety of scams affecting older adults. This information is available here: <http://www.fbi.gov/scams-safety/fraud/seniors>.



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AgeOptions, the Area Agency on Aging of Suburban Cook County, is committed to improving the quality of life and maintaining the dignity of older adults and those who care about them – through leadership and support, community partnerships, comprehensive services, accurate information and powerful advocacy.

Fraud Alerts contain information about current scams taking place in Illinois, announcements and updates about programs or services related to health care and/or fraud protection, and links to news articles about health care and fraud topics. Please forward any recommendations or announcements that you would like to be included in a future Fraud Alert to erin.weir@ageoptions.org.