

# FraudAlert!

*Helping keep the promise.*



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• Coalition of Wisconsin Aging Groups Elder Law Center

**From the Project Director. . . . . Elizabeth Conrad**

## **Let's Get Acquainted**

**By Judy Steinke, Wisconsin SMP Volunteer Coordinator**

This month, Wisconsin SMP (Senior Medicare Patrol) would like to introduce Bruce Oradei of Tomahawk. Bruce attended the SMP Volunteer Foundations Training that was held in Rhinelander in July 2010, and he shares the SMP message in both Lincoln and Oneida Counties.

Bruce moved to Tomahawk in 1996 after retiring from a career with the Wisconsin Education Association Council (WEAC). While at WEAC he served as a lobbyist and political consultant for over 25 years.

As a child growing up in Iron Mountain, Michigan, Bruce learned the importance of volunteer service from his parents. During World War II, he accompanied his mother who volunteered as an Air Raid Warden. They would patrol the streets during blackouts and remind people to turn off their lights. Volunteering has always been a part of his life. Bruce says, "I feel full of life with no aches or pains, so I can continue to do things for others".

Bruce's volunteer activities include serving as the President of the Lincoln County Lakes and Rivers Association, and he also serves on the Board of Directors for the Lake Alice Association. He works with these organizations to help preserve the quality of the lakes and stop the spread of aquatic invasive species.

Bruce and his wife, Marleen, have five grown children and ten grandchildren. Their children and grandchildren have grown up enjoying time spent on Squirrel Lake in Minocqua and Lake Alice in Tomahawk.

Thank you, Bruce, for sharing your skills and time with the Wisconsin SMP. We are grateful that your parents taught you the importance of volunteering!

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### **Wisconsin SMP**

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## **Wisconsin SMP to Hold Volunteer Training in Marinette**

**By Kevin Brown, Wisconsin SMP Capacity Building Grant Manager/Trainer**

In *The Lorax*, Dr. Seuss wrote: “Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It’s not.” Fortunately, Wisconsin SMP (Senior Medicare Patrol) has dozens of volunteers who care “a whole awful lot” about healthcare fraud. Our hard-working volunteers make presentations to groups and distribute materials at community events across the state to educate Medicare beneficiaries, caregivers, and professionals about how to prevent, detect, and report healthcare fraud, waste, and abuse.

Earlier this month, federal officials held a news conference to announce that they had recovered a record-high \$4.1 billion in healthcare fraud judgments in 2011 (see the article elsewhere in this issue for more details). Attorney General Eric Holder declared, “Our collaborative efforts to prevent, identify, and prosecute the most egregious instances of healthcare fraud have never been stronger.” SMP volunteers are an invaluable part of the team that has helped make this very serious problem “get better.” We thank them for their efforts and invite you to join our team.

I am pleased to announce that the next Wisconsin SMP Volunteer Training will be held on April 17 at the Marinette Senior Center from 9:30 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. This session is an in-depth workshop that provides participants with a foundation of knowledge in three main areas: the SMP program, Medicare basics, and Medicare fraud, waste, and abuse. If you would like to attend the Marinette session or are interested in helping us bring an SMP volunteer training to your part of the state, please contact me at (800) 488-2596, ext. 315 or [kbrown@cwag.org](mailto:kbrown@cwag.org).

For more information about Wisconsin SMP and to download our volunteer application form, please go to [www.wisconsinsmp.org](http://www.wisconsinsmp.org).

## **SMP Volunteer Risk and Program Management Update**

Wisconsin SMP is one of 54 projects across the United States, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands that is funded by a grant from the Administration on Aging,. The Coalition of Wisconsin Aging Groups has been awarded SMP grants continuously since they first became available in 1997. In recent years, the Administration on Aging has requested that the National Consumer Protection Technical Resource Center (The Center) of Waterloo, Iowa, work with all SMPs to create a consistent level of training for the project directors and staff; training and screening of volunteers; and the reporting of outreach and education activities, simple inquiries, and complex issues. The Center is currently working with Linda Graff and Associates, Inc. to create Volunteer Risk and Program Management Policies for use by all SMP projects. One part of the policies involves the updated **Volunteer Role Classifications** as listed below:

### **Distributing Information**

- Transporting and disseminating SMP materials to sites and events
- May include reading or presenting prepared copy or performing scripted activities for outreach
- Does not involve engaging beneficiaries in one-on-one conversations

## **Assisting With Administration**

- Assisting SMP staff through administrative work such as copying, filing, data entry, placing outbound calls in support of the SMP's activities
- Does not involve taking inbound calls from beneficiaries

## **Staffing Exhibits**

- Setting up and working exhibit booths/resource tables at events
- Providing general information about the SMP and Medicare/Medicaid fraud, errors, and abuse
- Does not involve discussions of personal information- referrals would be made to the county or tribal Elderly Benefit Specialist or SMP staff

## **Making Group Presentations**

- Giving substantive presentations on SMP topics to audiences
- Offering an opportunity for interaction with the audience
- Limited to providing general information but not engaging in personal information or situations – referrals would be made to the county or tribal Elderly Benefit Specialist or SMP staff

## **Counseling**

- Counseling involves direct discussion with beneficiaries about their individual situations
- Currently, Wisconsin SMP volunteers do not offer counseling services. Wisconsin is the only state that has Elderly Benefit Specialists (EBS) at the county and tribal level. Beneficiaries who are in need of counseling are referred to them. The EBS then determines if a referral should be made to the Wisconsin SMP Project Director for review as a possible fraud case.

## **Handling Complex Issues and Referrals**

- Wisconsin SMP volunteers will refer beneficiaries who are reporting suspected Medicare fraud, errors, or abuse to their county or tribal Elderly Benefit Specialist and/or the Wisconsin SMP Project Director.

## **Other Roles**

- Other roles may be created as needed
- SMP staff will work to determine the types of roles and the development of volunteer assignments and role descriptions.

Wisconsin SMP is recruiting additional volunteers statewide. If you are interested in learning more about being trained as an SMP volunteer, please contact Judy Steinke, Wisconsin SMP Volunteer Coordinator, at (800) 488-2596, Ext. 342 or [jsteinke@cwag.org](mailto:jsteinke@cwag.org).

## **Green County Resident Convicted of Medicaid Fraud**

Attorney General J.B. Van Hollen announced on January 24 that a Green County business owner has been convicted of defrauding Medicaid by nearly \$74,000.

According to a criminal complaint from the Department of Justice, Anthony Anglin, a resident of Monroe, owned Anglin Transportation Company, a specialized medical vehicle service that transports Medicaid recipients to and from medical appointments. Between June 2009 and April 2010, Anglin billed the Medicaid program for services his company never provided. Medicaid paid a total of \$73,990 for these fraudulent billings.

The case was investigated by the Medicaid Fraud Control and Elder Abuse Unit and prosecuted by Assistant Attorney General Jeffrey Gabrysiak.

Anglin entered a no-contest plea to one felony fraud count and is scheduled for sentencing on March 3.

*Source:* Department of Justice Press Release (1/24/12)

*Reprinted with permission of the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection*

February 1, 2012

## **Consumer Protection Announces 2011 Top Complaints**

MADISON – The nation’s fastest growing crime is now the source of Wisconsin’s fastest rising group of consumer complaints. Making its first appearance on the annual top ten chart, identity theft ranks fifth in the “Top Ten Consumer Complaints of 2011” list released today by the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP).

“For identity thieves, accessing personal information like social security numbers, credit card numbers, and financial account information is like winning the lottery,” said Sandy Chalmers, Division Administrator of Trade and Consumer Protection. “Remember that identity thieves will do or say anything to get their hands on your personal information.”

Chalmers said that consumers should use extreme caution when sharing personal information online and should keep an eye on credit reports and bank statements. Irregular activity should be reported immediately to your bank or credit card company.

Within the identity theft category, consumers most often reported fraudulent use of personal information or being the victim of a data breach. Wisconsin’s data breach law requires that companies notify victims within 45 days of becoming aware of the breach.

For the ninth year in a row, telemarketing complaints led by “No Call List” violations topped the annual count. Consumers filed 1,669 telemarketing complaints in 2011.

“Every day, we receive dozens of calls from Wisconsin consumers who are fed up with robocalls from ‘Rachel’ about lowering their credit card interest rates,” said Chalmers. “Most of these pre-recorded

solicitations are illegal. If you want to stop getting fraudulent robocalls, the best thing to do is to hang up. Don't press a number to speak to a live person or to 'opt-out' of future calls, because that validates your phone number as an active account."

Chalmers said the best way to limit the number of legitimate telemarketing calls you receive on your home or cell line is to sign up your phone numbers for the No Call List at 1-866-9NOCALL or online at [www.nocall.wisconsin.gov](http://www.nocall.wisconsin.gov). Telemarketers who knowingly and repeatedly violate the policy are investigated and can face fines and prosecution.

Telecommunications complaints against telephone and internet services jumped to second in the 2011 list with 1,272 written complaints. This number is due in large part to billing issues and bundling of services.

"Keep a close eye on your phone, internet and cable bills and question any charges you are unsure about," said Chalmers. "Read the fine print and make sure you fully understand your responsibilities before entering into any sort of service contract."

Landlord/tenant issues dropped to third in this year's complaint list with 837 written complaints, with most complaints relating to security deposit and lease provisions.

Home improvement issues retained their spot as fourth on the list with 338 complaints.

Complaints about gas pump accuracy tied with identity theft for fifth with 225 complaints. Rounding out the top ten are the categories of motor vehicle sales (6); furniture/home furnishings (7); motor vehicle repairs (8); satellite dish (9); and (tied) dentistry and contest/sweepstakes/prize promotions (10).

DATCP recorded 10,220 new formal written complaints and closed 10,304 existing complaints in 2011.

For more consumer information or to file a consumer complaint, visit the Bureau of Consumer Protection's website at [www.datcp.wis.gov](http://www.datcp.wis.gov); send an email to [datcp hotline@wisconsin.gov](mailto:datcp hotline@wisconsin.gov); or call toll-free at 1-800-422-7128.

## **Former Massachusetts Dentist Sentenced for Medicaid Fraud**

On January 30, a former Massachusetts dentist was sentenced to 2 ½ years in jail, with all but one year suspended, after pleading guilty to defrauding Medicaid of \$130,000, assault and battery, illegally prescribing prescription drugs, and intimidating a witness.

Michael Clair, who had a dental practice in Fall River, Massachusetts, was convicted of using sections of paper clips instead of stainless steel posts in root canals to save money. Some of Clair's patients reported infections after he performed root canals on them.

Despite being suspended by Medicaid in 2002, Clair continued to file claims using the names of other dentists in his practice. His license to practice dentistry was suspended in Massachusetts in 2006. He is now no longer licensed to practice in any state.

James Kulild, a professor of endodontics at the University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Dentistry, said that a paper clip is acceptable in dental procedures only in very limited circumstances and should never be left in permanently. He also stated, "Paper clips do not satisfy the requirements for posts, not only because they aren't made of stainless steel but because their shape and consistency will not allow them to be functionally acceptable to use."

*Sources:* Wisconsin State Journal (1/25/12), MSNBC (1/30/12), and The Huffington Post (1/24/12)

## **Federal Government Recovers Record \$4.1 Billion in Medicare Fraud in 2011**

Attorney General Eric Holder and Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Kathleen Sebelius announced on February 14 that federal officials recovered \$4.1 billion in healthcare fraud judgments in 2011, a record high and a 50% increase from 2009. According to the HHS inspector general, the federal government has collected \$7.20 for every dollar spent on fighting fraud between 2009 and 2011.

Attorney General Holder and Secretary Sebelius attributed the increase to new tools that are allowing them to crack down on fraudulent Medicare claims. They said that their agencies are improving the screening process before allowing providers into the system and expanding enrollment requirements. Site visits are now being conducted to make sure that moderate risk providers are operating in a legitimate office, and high risk providers are also subject to fingerprint and background checks.

Federal officials credited the increase in recovered funds in part to strike force teams created in 2009 in fraud hot spots around the country, including Miami, Detroit, and Los Angeles. The teams charged 323 defendants, who billed the Medicare program more than \$1 billion last year. That includes a massive bust in February 2011 that involved more than 100 doctors, nurses, and physical therapists in nine states. Judges are also taking a harder line by increasing the average prison sentence in fraud cases to more than 47 months in 2011, which is up from 42 months in 2010.

Secretary Sebelius released a statement saying, "Fighting fraud is one of our top priorities and we have recovered an unprecedented number of taxpayer dollars. Our efforts strengthen the integrity of our health care programs, and meet the president's call for a return to American values that ensure everyone gets a fair shot, everyone does their fair share, and everyone plays by the same rules."

*Sources:* The Huffington Post (2/14/12) and USA Today (2/14/12)

## **CMS Increases Access to Data on Hospital Infection Rates**

On February 7, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) announced that its web tool, *Hospital Compare*, will now include data on how often central line-associated bloodstream infections (CLABSIs) occur in hospital intensive care units in the U.S. These preventable infections are one of the most serious healthcare-associated infections and result in thousands of deaths each year and almost \$700 million in additional costs to the U.S. healthcare system. CMS officials said that reporting this data will hold hospitals accountable for lowering their infection rates, which will save thousands of lives and millions of dollars each year.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), there were about 41,000 CLABSIs contracted in U.S. hospitals in 2009. Studies have shown that these infections are fatal for up to 25% of patients who contract them. Caring for a patient with a CLABSI also adds approximately \$17,000 to a hospitalization. The CDC and CMS plan to use the new data to highlight hospital infection prevention efforts and identify areas across the country where more work is needed to prevent CLABSIs.

*Hospital Compare*, one of Medicare's most popular web tools, receives nearly 1 million visitors each month and is available in both English and Spanish. This tool has been available since 2005 to provide information about the quality of care provided in more than 4,700 acute-care, critical access, and children's hospitals. The website also offers information on mortality and readmission rates for each hospital, along with ten measures that capture patient experience with hospital care, 17 measures that assess patient safety at each hospital, 25 process-of-care measures, and three children's asthma care measures.

For more information about *Hospital Compare*, visit: <http://www.hospitalcompare.hhs.gov>.

Source: CMS Media Relations Group (2/7/12)

## **Test Your Medicare Knowledge with the Kaiser Family Foundation Quiz**

How much do you know about the Medicare program, who it serves, what it covers, and its financial status? The Kaiser Family Foundation challenges consumers to take their ten-question Medicare Quiz to find out. The introduction to the quiz states, "Medicare remains a hot topic in Washington and around the country as political leaders and other policy makers weigh potential changes to the program." The quiz was created to encourage people to find out what they know about the Medicare program and learn more about areas they are unfamiliar with so that they can better understand these potential policy changes.

The multiple choice quiz includes questions such as:

- Approximately what share of the federal budget goes toward Medicare, the federal program that provides health insurance to elderly and disabled Americans across all income levels?
- Which one of the following services is not typically covered by Medicare?
- Do all Medicare beneficiaries pay the same premium for coverage of physician and outpatient services, regardless of their income?
- Is Medicare spending expected to grow faster or slower per person than private health insurance spending over the next decade?
- Under current law, how soon is Medicare's Hospital Insurance Trust Fund projected to become insolvent, meaning it will not have enough money to pay the full cost of beneficiaries' hospital care?

After completing the short quiz, individuals will receive their score along with an explanation of all answers and links to Kaiser fact sheets for more information on each topic. To take the Kaiser Family Foundation Medicare Quiz, go to: <http://quiz.kff.org/medicare/medicare-quiz.aspx>.

Source: Kaiser Family Foundation website ([www.kff.org](http://www.kff.org))

## SMP Activities

<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>County</b>
February 1	SMP Presentation-Lunch & Brain Games Group-Rhineland	Oneida
February 3	SMP Presentation & Booth-Super Senior Day-Milwaukee	Milwaukee
February 7	SMP Presentation-Hmong Community Center-La Crosse	La Crosse
February 7	SMP Presentation-AARP Group-La Crosse	La Crosse
February 7	SMP Presentation-The Peter Rich Community Center-Superior	Douglas
February 9	SMP Presentation-Iron County ADRC	Iron
February 11	SMP Presentation-Senior Exercise Class-Eagle River	Vilas
February 16	SMP Presentation-Hickoryview Commons-Oconomowoc	Waukesha
February 18	SMP Booth-Progressive Grassroots Festival-Mazomanie	Dane
February 23	SMP Volunteer Foundations Training-Madison	Dane
February 27	SMP Presentation-Riverview Commons-Watertown	Jefferson
February 28	SMP Presentation-Tomahawk Women's Group	Lincoln
March 3	SMP Booth-Health and Wellness Expo-New Richmond	St. Croix
March 7	SMP Presentation-The Gathering Place-Milton	Rock
March 21	SMP Presentation-VIP Group-La Crosse	La Crosse
March 28-April 1	2012 Aging in America Conference-Washington, DC	
March 29	SMP Presentation-Augusta Senior Center	Eau Claire
April 10	SMP Presentation-Park Tower Apts.-Eau Claire	Eau Claire
April 12	SMP Presentation-St. John's Apts.-Eau Claire	Eau Claire
April 17	SMP Volunteer Foundations Training-Marinette	Marinette
April 18	SMP Presentation-Caregiver Support Group-Marinette	Marinette
April 18	SMP Presentation-Marinette Senior Center	Marinette
April 22	SMP Booth-Cedar Mall 50+ Event-Rice Lake	Barron
April 24	SMP Presentation-West Allis Senior Center	Milwaukee
April 25	SMP Presentation-Menomonee Falls Library	Waukesha
April 27	SMP Booth-Coulee Region RSVP Wellness Expo-Onalaska	La Crosse
May 3-4	Wisconsin Volunteer Coordinators' Annual Conference	Sheboygan
May 7-8	SMP Presentation & Booth-State Alzheimer's Conference	Sauk
May 11	SMP Booth-Multi-Cultural Fair-Madison	Dane
May 15	SMP Women's Health Policy Summit-Madison	Dane
May 18	SMP Booth-Multi-Cultural Senior Health Fair Fair-Madison	Dane
May 22	SMP Presentation-FIA Lunch & Learn-Sparta	Monroe
May 23	SMP Presentation-Monona Senior Center	Dane
June 5	SMP Presentation-8 <sup>th</sup> Air Force Historical Society-Milwaukee	Milwaukee
June 14-15	SMP Presentation & Booth-WI Assn. of Service Coords. Conf.	Dane
June 20	SMP Presentation-ADRC-Wautoma	Waushara
July 17-19	SMP Booth-Farm Technology Days-New London	Outagamie
September 21-21	2012 Aging Network Conference-Wisconsin Dells	Sauk
October 2	SMP Booth-Colloquium on Aging-Madison	Dane

## CWAG Activities

<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>County</b>
March 16	CWAG District 1 Spring Meeting-Madison Senior Center	Dane
March 26	CWAG District 4 Spring Meeting-Clarion Hotel, Green Bay	Brown
April 11	CWAG District 7 Spring Meeting-Merrill	Lincoln

April 12	CWAG District 6 Spring Meeting-Cadott	Chippewa
April 23	CWAG District 2B Spring Meeting-Burlington Water Dept.	Kenosha
April 24	CWAG District 2A Spring Meeting-Washington Park Senior Ctr.	Milwaukee
April 30-May 2	CWAG Senior Statesmanship Class-Madison	Dane
July 26-27	CWAG Annual Convention-Stevens Point	Portage

**We are always looking for opportunities to support our colleagues in the aging network. Please contact Wisconsin SMP and let us know about upcoming events in your area.**

## **Local Experts to Address “Different Perspectives on Living with Cancer”**

There is no handbook for living with cancer—or for being a cancer survivor, a caregiver or a supporter of someone living with cancer. To help answer some of life’s questions about cancer, a panel of experts will be hosting a discussion called *Different Perspectives on Living with Cancer*. The public is invited to attend the free forum at Gilda’s Club Community Room, 7907 UW Health Court in Middleton on Saturday, March 17, from 9:30 a.m. to noon.

The forum will be moderated by Ed Prendergast, MD, Dean Clinic Hematology & Oncology. Panelists are Dena Green, MD, Hospice and Palliative Board certified oncologist with Agrace HospiceCare; Garth Heckman, 45-year-old colon cancer survivor, pastor of Harmony Church and owner of SouthSide Bully gym and training; Pamela Wick, RN, OCN, clinical RN advisor for Dean Clinic Hematology & Oncology; Lauren Cunningham, PhD, psychologist and Instant Sisters facilitator for Gilda’s Club; and Emily Link, MEd, Gilda’s Club facilitator.

People interested in attending are encouraged to submit questions for the panel at the time of registration. Questions can be related to any cancer topic involving patients, survivors, caregivers or loved ones of those with cancer. Questions can also be submitted to the panel during the event.

To register for the forum, visit [www.gildasclubmadison.org](http://www.gildasclubmadison.org) or call (608) 828-8880. Space is limited. For people not physically able to attend, a limited number of phone lines are available to call in to listen or ask questions during the event. Please reserve a call-in line at the time of registration. A complimentary light breakfast will be provided by the Agrace HospiceCare Doc Rock Café.

## **Agrace HospiceCare to Offer Two Educational Seminars in March**

Two free educational seminars will be presented by Agrace HospiceCare in Madison in March. “Caring for Someone with Alzheimer’s or Dementia” will be held at Agrace HospiceCare, 5395 E. Cheryl Parkway, on Tuesday, March 13, from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Participants will learn about the changing approaches and communication techniques to use as memory loss diseases progress. Information will also be shared about tools available to caregivers, local support resources and how Agrace can help. “Making the Hospice Care Choice,” which explores what hospice is and who is eligible, will be offered Monday, March 19, from 1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. at Agrace HospiceCare. Participants will learn about the many services and programs that are available at Agrace and how choosing hospice means choosing quality of life. Pre-registration is requested for both seminars; please call Laura Jennings, Agrace public affairs, at (608) 327-7192.

## FRAUD ALERT – ELECTRONIC VERSION

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Contact Patti Wiersma at [pwiersma@cwag.org](mailto:pwiersma@cwag.org),  
giving her your e-mail address,  
to add to our list.

Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Check out the new Wisconsin SMP web site  
[www.wisconsinsmp.org](http://www.wisconsinsmp.org)

You Can also Access Our Publication by visiting our new web site [www.wisconsinsmp.org](http://www.wisconsinsmp.org)  
Or you can visit the Coalition of Wisconsin Aging Groups web site [www.cwag.org](http://www.cwag.org)  
Click on Publications then click on Wisconsin Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) and scroll down  
and click on the edition you wish to view.

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In an effort to save paper, postage and be “volunteer friendly,” we will E-mail issues of the *Fraud Alert* to those who have E-mail. Please contact Patti Wiersma at [pwiersma@cwag.org](mailto:pwiersma@cwag.org), giving her your e-mail address to add to our list. **WE DO SUGGEST THAT YOU PRINT EACH ISSUE AND SAVE IT IN YOUR MEDICARE BINDER FOR FUTURE USE. Thank you!**

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