



Press Release

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**NHCAA Presents Its Public Awareness Award to the
Administration on Aging's Senior Medicare Patrol Program**

(Las Vegas, NV) –The **National Health Care Anti-Fraud Association (NHCAA)** today awards the 2010 NHCAA **Excellence in Public Awareness Award** to the **Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP)**, a program administered by the **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration on Aging (AoA)**. This award is presented annually to recognize exemplary efforts to raise public awareness about the problem of health care fraud in our nation's health care system. Representatives from AoA and its SMP Resource Center will accept the award today at the NHCAA's Annual Training Conference at Mandalay Bay in Las Vegas.

The Senior Medicare Patrol Program is being recognized for its vital work of informing our nation's seniors about the dangers of Medicare fraud. AoA provides funds to SMP grantees to recruit, train and mobilize a cadre of senior volunteers to educate their peers in local communities to prevent, detect and report Medicare, Medicaid and other health care fraud. Educating consumers to prevent health care fraud is the essence of the mission and message of AoA's SMP program. The program has grown from a 5-state demonstration in the mid-1990s to 54 SMP projects today –one in every state, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

In choosing this year's awardees, NHCAA was impressed by SMP's quantifiable achievements. In 2009, its staff and force of more than 4,400 volunteers held over 7,100 group education sessions and over 33,800 individual counseling sessions. It has also fielded over 60,000 inquiries, referring 966 of those inquiries to authorities for further action. And SMP partnership with authorities in every state, territory and the District of Columbia has been critical to raising awareness among seniors about Medicare fraud and what they can do to help combat it. Overall,

Senior Medicare Patrol projects have reached close to 24 million people with the fraud prevention message through community education events, and provided direct beneficiary education to close to 4 million beneficiaries since the program's inception in 1997.

“We honor SMP and the AoA for their outstanding contributions to alerting seniors about the many dangers of health care fraud,” stated NHCAA Executive Director Louis Saccoccio. “One of the critical tools necessary to fighting health care fraud is education; an educated citizenry can better recognize the warning signs of fraudulent schemes and is less likely to be victimized by unscrupulous providers and organized crime groups. SMP and AoA have provided an invaluable service by empowering our nation's seniors with knowledge and giving them the resources to recognize and report suspected fraud to the authorities.”

The NHCAA's Awards Luncheon is a function of NHCAA's Annual Training Conference; over 1,300 public- and private-sector health care fraud investigators are in attendance to learn about fraud trends and emerging schemes and explore innovative solutions that will help protect the American public from the heavy human and economic costs of health care fraud.

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