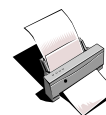


THE SENTINEL

A PUBLICATION OF THE CENTER OF SERVICE AND INFORMATION FOR
SENIOR MEDICARE PATROL (SMP) PROJECTS



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AOA UPDATE

[New Faces, Proven Format at the National Training Meeting](#)

Rotating group sessions, a fan favorite last year, are back on the agenda for this year's meeting. Katie Glendening and Stacey Platte have joined the ACL SMP team and will be introduced at the meeting.

NEWSROOM

[Ohio Mourns the Loss of One of Its Own](#)

Project Assistant Dave Kleinfelter passed away July 1. He was best known for his jovial nature and humor.

[Chiropractic Services in Medicare: A Vulnerable Benefit?](#)

With the dramatic growth in Medicare spending on chiropractic treatments, the OIG has three reports on Medicare's chiropractic benefit in the works. Two focus on questionable billing practices for noncovered services; the other will compile the results of other OIG studies on chiropractic services. A sidebar describes the Local Coverage Determination and the *Medicare Benefit Policy Manual*.

[Hard to Reach but Not Out of Reach](#)

The National Hispanic SMP offers best practices on conducting effective outreach. A "one-size-fits-all" strategy will not work to help older Hispanic adults and their families. Cultivating personalized relationships with local bilingual leaders who can amplify the Medicare fraud prevention message is just as important as direct outreach. There is a tremendous opportunity to leverage the trust Hispanic older adults have in their local Spanish-language media to develop strong, mutually beneficial relationships.

[OIG Proposes to Expand Fraud/Abuse Sanctions and Exclusion Authority](#)

The OIG proposed two new regulations to address fraud and abuse in federal health care programs. One deals with excluding entities under certain conditions and gives new authority to issue subpoenas when pursuing potential exclusions. The other would expand its Civil Monetary Penalty authority. A sidebar discusses an OIG report on terminated beneficiaries.

continued

RACs Tag \$2 Billion+ in Overpayments but Considered Overzealous by Some

There is a controversy over whether RACs might be working too hard – identifying activities that upon appeal turn out not to be improper – and thus increasing the cost of health care due to the appeals process. There also have been complaints from health care providers about backlogged appeals of denials and the financial incentives RACs receive for identifying improper payments. A sidebar describes how recovery auditors are paid.

Center Unveils New Website

The SMP Resource Center's new website has a contemporary design that's friendly to older eyes, reflects greater diversity, contains new and timeless information on fraud, and calls upon beneficiaries to help by reading their statements and considering becoming an SMP volunteer. The expanded SMP Locator better features SMP toll-free numbers and includes a category for interested volunteers. The Center's website has always been intended for two distinct audiences: Medicare beneficiaries/caregivers and SMPs/SMP partners, but the redesign has taken the different needs of these audiences into greater consideration.



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