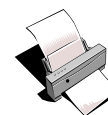


# THE SENTINEL

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



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## AOA UPDATE

### [Spring Brings New Funding and Referrals Process While Planning for National Meeting](#)

Expanded funding provides \$7.3 million to SMP projects. A new SMP funding opportunity serves Medicare beneficiaries under age 65; lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender seniors; and American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) Medicare beneficiaries. The new SMP complex issues referral process went into effect May 1.

## NEWSROOM

### [Facility Fees in Medicare Outpatient Settings](#)

When a physician sees patients in a facility that is part of a hospital, the hospital may legitimately add a facility fee to the Medicare bill. Even though the fee may far exceed the cost of providing the same service in the physician's own office, it's not fraud.

### [CMS Proposes Raising Reward for Successful Fraud Tips to \\$9.9 Million](#)

CMS wants to raise the maximum reward amount for successful tips that result in Medicare recoveries. The current maximum is 10 percent of the amount collected, with a cap of \$1,000. CMS' proposal would raise these figures to 15 percent and \$9.9 million, respectively. If finalized, CMS estimates that the proposed regulations will increase the collection of improper payments by an estimated \$24.5 million a year.

### [Observation Status Controversy Still Unresolved](#)

Observation status (as opposed to inpatient) has huge financial implications for Medicare beneficiaries. CMS has implemented an interim rule, though problems persist. Read about what observation status is, why it is being used by hospitals, and possible ways for beneficiaries to avoid the financial pitfalls of the observation status conundrum.

### [New Resource Library Coming This Summer](#)

The Resource Library at [www.smpresource.org](http://www.smpresource.org) is being redesigned with new search capabilities, an attractive page that includes featured, most popular, and new resources — all password-protected for greater SMP privacy.

*continued*

## SMP SUCCESS STORIES

### SMP Presenters Spotlight Health Care Fraud at 2013 ASA Conference

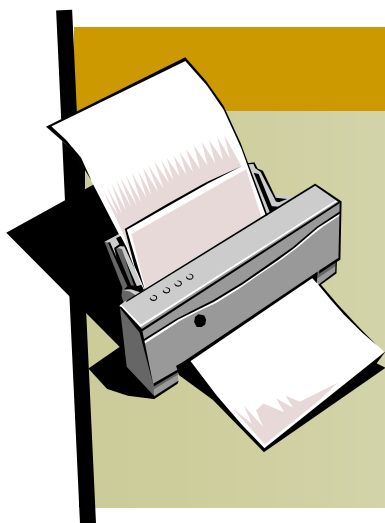
The Wisconsin SMP discussed a partnership to increase outreach to the Hmong community at the 2013 American Society on Aging conference. Presenters also included the Administration for Community Living, the North Dakota SMP, and the Illinois SMP.

## SMART FACTS Security Settings Update

To increase the security of SMART FACTS data, the following changes will take place in SMART FACTS effective July 1:

- 1) “Strong” passwords will be required.
  - a. Passwords must be at least six characters long.
  - b. Passwords must include at least one numeric character, one letter, AND one special character/non-alpha-numeric.
- 2) All SMART FACTS users will be required to change their password every 30 days.
- 3) For instructions on how to change your password in SMART FACTS and for help if you forget your password, see the SMART FACTS Manual, Chapter 2, Pages 9–10.
- 4) For more information about SMART FACTS policy, see VRPM Policy 4.5 and Appendix I of the SMART FACTS manual.

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