

THE SENTINEL

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



ACL UPDATE

[Spring Brings News of Conference, New Medicare Cards, OIG Project](#)

Conference planning includes committees of SMPs and SHIPs. CMS prepares to distribute new Medicare cards, bringing new opportunities for scammers. ACL works with the OIG on PSAs, a brochure, and training on medical identity theft.

NEWSROOM

[FTC: Working with Partners to Educate People about Health Care Fraud](#)

Education is the first line of defense against fraud and deception in the marketplace. Partnerships are vital in expanding education outreach to older consumers. The FTC has information, including stories about recent cases, and free materials that SMPs can pass along.

[Federal Roundup: Health Care Fraud Recoveries Increase](#)

Health care fraud recoveries are up, and \$5 were recovered for every dollar spent from the HCFAC program. The SMP program continues to play a crucial role in fraud prevention. Budgets are being developed for FY 2018.

[Medicare's Face-to-Face Encounter Rules Vary](#)

When does the law require physicians or other approved health care providers to see patients face to face as a condition for Medicare payment? The question arose in connection with an April mentor call discussion of deceptive marketing for back braces. There are at least four benefit categories as well as other criteria.

[Program Transitions to the Revised VRPM Policies](#)

ACL has revised and streamlined the VRPM policies for SMPs and SHIPs. The total number of individual policies reduced from 174 to 143. The policies also now contain more information than they did previously to make it easier to understand and take action on the policies. Moving to the new policies requires reading the updated policies, reviewing updated VRPM resources, and a few other steps.

Center Launches Facebook Page

The SMP Resource Center's new Facebook page provides content for SMPs to use in their outreach, connects SMPs with other SMPs, and promotes SMP Resource Center resources.

SMP Resource Center Picks Favorites

With all the resources on www.smpresource.org to choose, which stand out to Center staff? Here are some highlights from all members of the Resource Center.

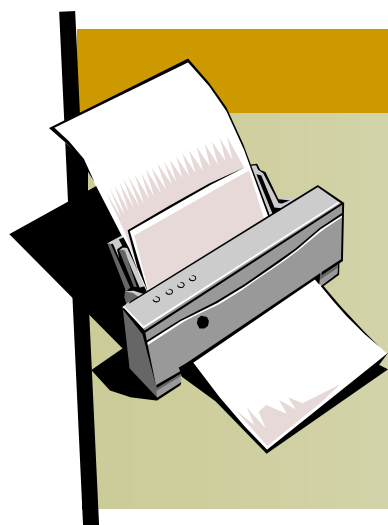
SMP BEST PRACTICES

Walkers and Wheelchairs and Braces, Oh My!

The New York SMP wrote this article for beneficiaries throughout the state after noticing an increase in complaints about “free” durable medical equipment offers. It explains DME scams, tells beneficiaries how to protect themselves, and details what a phone salesperson cannot do.

Anatomy of a Case: SMP Saves Beneficiary \$16,000

The Wyoming SMP's outreach on Medicare billing errors led to a case that saved a beneficiary thousands and returned money to him. The physician forgot to mention on at least three occasions that he was not enrolled in Medicare. The incident reminded him that Medicare has rules in place to protect the integrity of the program and the rights of beneficiaries.



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