

Ask SHIP

July, 2018



LOCAL HELP FOR PEOPLE WITH MEDICARE

Q: I got a phone call from someone saying they could get my new Medicare card to me sooner for a fee? Do I need a new card? Should I pay the fee to get it mailed to me sooner?

A: Yes, you will be receiving a new Medicare card, but NO, do not pay anything to anyone for the card.

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is announcing new Medicare cards to prevent fraud, fight identity theft, and keep taxpayer dollars safe.

They will be mailed out April, 2018 through April, 2019 throughout the country. In Indiana, most cards will begin being mailed around June.

The biggest reason for taking the Social Security numbers off of Medicare cards is to fight medical identity theft for people with Medicare.

By replacing the SSN-based HICN on all Medicare cards, CMS can better protect:

- Private health care and financial information.
- Federal health care benefit and service payments.

CMS has assigned all people with Medicare benefits a new, unique Medicare number, which contains a combination of numbers and uppercase letters. Your Social Security number will no longer be on your Medicare card.

People with Medicare will be instructed to safely and securely destroy their current Medicare card and keep their new Medicare number confidential.

Receiving your new card and your new Medicare number will not change your Medicare benefits. Learn more at <http://www.cms.gov/newcard>

Scams regarding the new Medicare cards have already begun. Fraudsters are capitalizing on the mailings to deceive beneficiaries. They may have many details about individuals, often taken from social media and other publicly available resources. They may sound very convincing.

The Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) helps beneficiaries fight back. SMP staff work in communities across the country to teach beneficiaries how to prevent,

detect, and report Medicare fraud, errors, and abuse.

Please remember, the new Medicare cards do not cost anything! Your Medicare insurance will not be canceled.

If you have questions about the new Medicare card or any other questions about Medicare, SHIP is here to help. Call SHIP at 1-800-452-4800, 1-866-846-0139 TDD or online at www.medicare.in.gov.

SHIP is a free, impartial counseling program provided by the Administration on Community Living and the Indiana State Department of Insurance.