



April 2019 Fraud Prevention Fact

This month's Fraud Fact from the Missouri SMP (Senior Medicare Patrol) focuses on providers offering DNA or genetic testing to older adults and telling them that the service is free to Medicare beneficiaries.

Out-of-the-blue genetic or DNA testing is NOT free and is not routinely covered for all Medicare patients. If an individual offers you or someone you know such services, DO NOT go along with it.

Here is how the scheme works:

A provider offers an educational session to a group of seniors at a church, senior housing complex or senior center. The provider takes the participants' Medicare numbers and does DNA swabs. The provider then bills Medicare for the services, which have not been deemed medically necessary and do not have a referral from a primary doctor. Providing contact information or anything else during an education session is OPTIONAL, and sign-up sheets should clearly state this.

In another scenario, the provider phones seniors and offers free DNA tests to be sent by mail. The older adults are instructed to swab their cheeks at home and return the kits. The caller gets the seniors' Medicare numbers and emphasizes there will be NO charge to the beneficiaries.

DO NOT give out your Medicare number over the phone, in the mail or in a group setting in exchange for a promised free service.

DNA testing IS legitimately used by doctors at times to help determine how effective some medications might be in treating some patients. However, you should ask your primary care doctor or your specialist, who is familiar with your medical history, about such tests. As always, report suspected Medicare fraud to the Missouri SMP at 1-888-515-6565.