

**Opioid Drug Fraud and Abuse**

**2019**

**CALIFORNIA**

SENIOR **MEDICARE PATROL WARNING!**

# The use of opioid drugs by older adults has grown significantly over the past decade and Medicare beneficiaries have among the highest and fastest-growing rates of diagnosed opioid misuse.

**»** Opioids killed more than **47,000** people *(2017, CMS)*

**» 2.1 million** Medicare beneficiaries have an opioid disorder. *(DHHS, 2018)*

**If you or someone you know is misusing opioid drugs, contact Senior Medicare Patrol.**

855-613-7080

For additional information on healthcare fraud, visit [**cahealthadvocates.org**](http://www.cahealthadvocates.org/)

# Find additional details on this fraud alert on the reverse side.

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**What are Opioids?**

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**36%** of all opioid overdose deaths involve a prescription opioid. (Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services)

**»** Opioids are derived from opium found in the poppy plant or created synthetically.

**»** Opiods are a class of drugs that work by binding to specific receptors in the brain, spinal cord, and gastrointestinal tract to diminish the body’s perception of pain.

**»** Opioids can change the way a person experiences pain.

**»** Opioids can also have an impact on other systems of the body, such as altering mood, slowing breathing, and causing constipation.

**»** Opioids include medications such as: tramadol, codeine, fentanyl, hydrocodone, morphine, oxycodone, and more.

**Remember opioid fraud and abuse occurs when:**

**» Medicare beneficiaries are over-prescribed medications.**

**» Pharmacies are involved in drug diversion which is a transfer of any legally prescribed controlled substance from the individual for whom it was prescribed to another person for any illicit use.**

**» Medicare is billed for medications not prescribed.**

**» Medicare is billed for medications not received.**

If you do come across such a scam, please report it to our [**California Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP)**](http://www.cahealthadvocates.org/) at

855-613-7080

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