[USE YOUR OWN LETTERHEAD, INCLUDING LOGO]

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact Information

[INSERT ORGANIZATION NAME. INCLUDE SENIOR MEDICARE PATROL.]
[INSERT CONTACT NAME]
[INSERT PHONE NUMBER]
[INSERT EMAIL ADDRESS]
[INSERT WEB ADDRESS]

 **Coverage Confusion Causes the Potential for Fraud in Nursing Homes**

Nursing homes are necessary and life-saving facilities, with staff giving care and comfort in difficult times. Skilled nursing facilities (SNFs), which are often located within nursing homes, provide short-term, high-level care that can be covered by Medicare if a beneficiary meets certain requirements. Housing multiple levels of support within one building can cause confusion for patients and their families, who may not understand the billing systems and conditions that must be met for coverage. This may make them easy victims of fraud.

“Contrary to what many people think, Medicare usually does not pay for long-term nursing care. Instead, Medicare will cover a short-term SNF stay at a nursing home. Coverage for this stay requires that the beneficiary was an inpatient at a hospital for at least three days before going into the nursing home and that their doctor ordered inpatient skilled nursing services and/or rehabilitation services daily,” said [INSERT SMP CONTACT NAME AND TITLE HERE. Be sure to also include “Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP)”].

Medicare fraud can occur when Medicare is charged for:

* Services that were not deemed medically necessary by your doctor
* Therapy services or visits that were billed to Medicare but were not provided
* More expensive services than what you were provided
* More therapy than what you were provided
* Skilled nursing services for dates after you were released from the SNF
* Days you were forced to remain in a SNF until your Part A benefits expired even though your condition improved and you wished to shift to home health care services

To stop nursing home care fraud, the SMP recommends that you:

* Read your Medicare Summary Notice (MSN) or Explanation of Benefits (EOB) to compare services for which Medicare was charged with what you actually received
* Be sure you work with your doctor to enroll you in any SNF therapy services you may need and to determine medical necessity for these services
* Do not accept gifts (such as money, gift cards, or groceries) in return for choosing a nursing home in which to receive skilled nursing
* Do not sign forms that you do not understand, including a Medicare Outpatient Observation Notice (MOON), an Advance Beneficiary Notice (ABN), or any form that is blank
* Report charges on your MSN or EOB for services or visits you did not receive
* Report charges on your MSN or EOB for services that are different than what you received
* Report quality-of-care complaints to your local SMP and the Beneficiary Family Centered Care-Quality Improvement Organization (BFCC-QIO)

The Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) is ready to provide you with the information you need to PROTECT yourself from Medicare fraud, errors, and abuse; DETECT potential fraud, errors, and abuse; and REPORT your concerns. SMPs help educate and empower Medicare beneficiaries in the fight against health care fraud. Your SMP can help you with your questions, concerns, or complaints about potential fraud and abuse issues. It also provides information and educational presentations. To locate your local Senior Medicare Patrol, contact [INSERT CONTACT INFORMATION].