



Preventing Medicare Fraud

## ND SMP Scam of the Month – August 2025

### “I Never Asked for That”: Story of a Medicare Scam

Margaret (not her real name), a widow living in Minot, thought it was just another phone call. “The caller said they were from Medicare,” she recalled. “They even knew my name and address.” The caller told me they would pause my benefits unless I confirmed my Medicare number.

Worried, she gave them the information, thinking she was protecting her coverage. Two weeks later a box appeared on her doorstep. Inside the box were knee braces, back supports, and diabetic test supplies—things she didn’t order and didn’t need. “I don’t have diabetes, so I thought it was just a mistake. Then my neighbor told me it might be a scam.” She checked her Medicare statement and was shocked to see that someone had billed over \$2,400 in her name for the equipment. Even worse, several companies she had never heard of claimed to be the providers.

Margaret called Medicare, and the person she talked to said she had been tricked by a scam. They told her to contact her local SMP office where someone could help her:

- **Report the fraud** to the Office of Inspector General (OIG)
- **File a dispute** for the false claims
- **Request a new Medicare number** to protect against further abuse.

It took nearly three months of phone calls, letters, and follow-up, but with help, Margaret finally had the fraudulent charges reversed and received a new Medicare number. Margaret’s message to others...don’t ever give out your Medicare number over the phone, even if they sound official. If it feels rushed or scary, hang up and call someone you trust.

#### Protect yourself like Margaret did:

- Medicare will never call to ask for your number or threaten to cancel your benefits.
- If something seems suspicious, hang up immediately.
- Contact ND SMP at 1-833-818-0029 or 1-800-Medicare for help.
- Always review your Medicare statements for unknown charges.

**If you suspect fraud**, contact the ND SMP at [ndsmp@minotstateu.edu](mailto:ndsmp@minotstateu.edu) or call 1-833-818-0029. For non-Medicare fraud issues, contact the ND Attorney General’s Office at 1-800-472-2600.

The information provided is intended to be a general summary only. Source of information: Pinnysurkis (28 April 25) Healthcare News Center. [healthcarenewscenter.com](https://healthcarenewscenter.com). *Senior healthcare fraud 2025: Urgent risks and protection tips*. [healthcarenewscenter.com](https://healthcarenewscenter.com).

**North Dakota Senior Medicare Patrol Phone: 833-818-0029 or (701) 858-3580**

For more information or to locate your SMP, visit <https://ndcpd.org/smp/>

This project was supported, in part, by grant number 90MPPG0079, from the Administration for Community Living, Department of Health and Human Services. The contents are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by ACL/HHS, or the U.S. Government.



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