



June 2019 Fraud Prevention Fact

The Missouri SMP (Senior Medicare Patrol) is still focused on warning you about the so-called DNA cancer screening scam. The scam, which we first talked about in last month's Fraud Fact, seems to be catching on like wildfire in Missouri and many other states.

Someone phones you, questions you about the history of cancer in your family, and offers you a free DNA swab testing kit to evaluate your risk. All you have to do is give the caller your Medicare number. They may ask for your doctor's name, implying that they will send your results to your doctor. You go along with it, and a few weeks later, the nicely packaged kit arrives. You give your swab and send it back. What's wrong with that? Unfortunately, now they have your health plan or Medicare number, and they can bill Medicare thousands of dollars for medically unnecessary tests or services that you never receive. They also have personal genetic information regarding your health. Some labs may offer a cheek swab for genetic testing as part of a "free" health screening to obtain your Medicare information for identity theft or fraudulent billing purposes. These people show up at senior centers or senior housing offering the free DNA cancer test in exchange for your Medicare number. They even photograph the Medicare cards. In a word, DON'T! Genetic tests must be ordered by your doctor to be covered by Medicare. Before you agree to genetic testing, be sure to check with your own doctor.

Your primary care physician and any specialists you are seeing are in the best position to know what testing you need, why you need it, and who should perform it. As always, report suspected Medicare fraud to the Missouri SMP at 1-888-515-6565.