Ensure You Protect Your Medicare ID Information

New cards are being mailed out to Medicare recipients. The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau is encouraging recipients to guard their information.

How does this scam work?
Medicare recipients can be victims of identity theft when the information on their Medicare ID cards, including a Social Security or Medicare ID number, is stolen. That information can be used to open new credit cards or bank accounts in the victim’s name, or to make fraudulent health care claims. For instance, a scammer might steal an ID number and bill Medicare for a motorized scooter in the name of the cardholder.

New Medicare cards are being mailed out to recipients, and they contain the Medicare ID number but not Social Security information. The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau is urging recipients to guard the new cards because Medicare fraud wastes a lot of money every year, which results in higher health care costs.

What if I’m a victim?
Report suspicious activities or Medicare fraud by calling 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227) or report it online through the Office of the Inspector General for the Department of Health and Human Services.

Report any suspected fraud to your law enforcement's non-emergency number. If you suspect that someone is a victim of elder abuse or financial exploitation, also report it to Adult Protective Services. Find your local APS at elderscare.acl.gov. If you think the person's safety may be at risk, call 911.

How can I protect myself?
Keep your cards secure, and do not share your numbers with anyone other than your health care providers. Medicare will not initiate contact with you via phone. Medicare will only call you if you've called and left a message or if a representative said that someone will call you back. If someone calls you unexpectedly claiming to be from Medicare, hang up.