



NEWS FROM SCDCA

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS
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September 11, 2013

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Release #13-026

1.800.922.1594 (toll free in SC)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Scam Alert: Healthcare Scams on the Rise

Columbia, SC... The South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs (SCDCA) is urging consumers to beware of the latest Medicare telephone scams where fraudsters are attempting to separate consumers from their sensitive personal information.

With the Affordable Care Act making headlines all over the country, scammers have found the perfect ploy to dupe consumers. SCDCA has received an increase in reports of a person contacting consumers to purportedly “verify” their Medicare number. The scammer justifies the need for the information by telling the consumer they will be receiving a new Medicare card. Another twist has a fraudster requesting banking information in order to sign the consumer up for “Obamacare” over the phone.

Follow these tips to keep your information safe:

- ***Be skeptical.*** Always be skeptical of anyone calling you regarding Medicare, especially when they are asking for personal information. Ask the caller to send you information in writing
- ***Safeguard your information.*** Never give out your SSN, bank account number or other sensitive information to someone you do not know.
- ***Know who is calling.*** If you are suspicious, hang up and call a number that you know belongs to the organization/agency the caller claims to represent.
- ***Warn your family and friends.*** Help prevent others from falling prey to these scams, especially elderly loved ones, as they are often targets of this type of call.

Consumers wanting more information on how to shop for a qualified health plan can visit www.HealthCare.gov or contact 1-800-318-2596. These resources are provided by the US Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

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Consumers are encouraged to report suspicious calls, e-mails or texts by calling SCDCA at 1-800-922-1594. To view the most recent and archived scam alerts and press releases, including a release regarding a medical alert device telephone scam, consumers can also visit www.consumer.sc.gov.

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SCDCA aims to protect consumers from inequities in the marketplace through advocacy, complaint mediation, enforcement and education. To file a complaint or get information on consumer issues, visit www.consumer.sc.gov or call toll-free, 1.800.922.1594.

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