

Senior GAZETTE

Spring 2020

by Lynda Ashley, Director, Amherst Township Senior Service Office (ATSSO)

Ways to protect yourself from Medicare errors, Fraud and Abuse

It is imperative that seniors treat their Medicare card and Social Security card like they would any other credit card. One should never give out the account numbers, especially to a solicitor on the telephone. You can also guard your card/account by not carrying it in your wallet or have the numbers written on a piece of paper and carried with you.

If you have given your Medicare or Social Security number to a caller, please contact Ohio Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) and follow the instructions at www.IdentityTheft.gov to report potential identity theft.

Medicare Summary Notice (MSN) or Explanation of Benefits (EOB) will arrive in the mail every three months and should be looked over carefully to make sure that the services charged were indeed for services rendered. Also check for double charges or items you didn't receive.

If you see any charge on your Medicare Summary Notice (MSN) or Explanation of Benefits (EOB) for services you did not receive – or, for something your doctor did not order – please **call your provider** to ask for an explanation of these charges.

If the provider's explanation does not resolve your concern, please call Ohio Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) at:

1-800-488-6070

or complete the "Contact Ohio SMP" form.

**ATSSO OFFICE HOURS:
8:00 A.M. – NOON (M-F)
Phone: 988-5894 – Ext. 101**

Email: amhersttwpseniors@gmail.com

MEAL PROGRAM OPTIONS

Amherst Township's meal program ended February 28, 2020. If you are a senior citizen and would like to receive home delivered meals, below are a few organizations that service our area:

- "Amherst Office on Aging" offers a daily meal delivery. For more information or to enroll please call 440-988-2817.
- "Simply EZ" offers daily meals delivered once a week. These are vacuum sealed, ready to heat meals; just keep in the refrigerator until you want to eat. For more information or to enroll please call 1-800-800-9929.
- "Neighborhood Alliance" offers a daily meal delivery. Cost is based on income, however, there is a waiting list. For more details or to enroll please call 440-277-8269 ext 6214.

NEW TO MEDICARE?

People with Medicare Part B can get a "Welcome to Medicare" visit within the first 12 months of having Part B or a yearly "Wellness" visit if they've had Part B for longer than 12 months. For details about these visits, go to:

www.medicare.gov

SOCIAL SECURITY WEBSITE

Did you know Social Security has a website with many tools to help you navigate the system? Are you approaching retirement age? Did you know you can apply for Social Security benefits online? Do you have to pay taxes on Social Security benefits? How do you apply for Social Security retirement benefits? What is your full retirement age? The information on the social security website is abundant.

On www.ssa.gov you will find answers to the above questions and a sample of additional, available information is listed below:

- The Retirement Estimator, the Life Expectancy Calculator, and the Early or Late Retirement Calculator.
- You can apply for Social Security benefits online. This is the fastest, most convenient way to apply for retirement, disability, or Medicare benefits without visiting a local office.
- You will find information on how to get a new, replacement, or corrected card.
- Your annual earnings and review estimates of your future Social Security benefits. You will need to access your Social Security Statement located on the website.
- A Frequently Asked Questions page with answers to the most common questions those new to Social Security may have.

ILLNESS PREVENTION

It's cold and flu season again. Did you know that prevention is the BEST defense against colds and flu? What do we mean by prevention? Below we have listed some easy but important steps to preventing illness:

- Hand Washing is the #1 preventative way to keep you from getting sick. Wash your hands with soap and water for approximately 20 seconds; sing a round of Happy Birthday or the ABC's while washing.
- Use Hand Sanitizer if you can't get to soap and water immediately. Keep a small bottle in your car and or your purse. Make it a habit to use it as soon as you get in your car from shopping, pumping gas, touching public door handles, handling money, etc.
- When out shopping, use the sanitizing cart wipes before placing your hands on the handle. Wash or sanitize your hands when you are finished.
- Don't touch your face. Most of us touch our face hundreds of times throughout the day.
- Get the flu shot yearly, especially if you have any underlying medical condition that may cause you to become hospitalized should you get the flu.
- Avoid shaking hands. Either fist bump or elbow bump when you greet someone.