



WARN YOUR MEDICARE PATIENTS

Your Medicare patients are at RISK. As you already know, Medicare is mailing new HIC cards to every Medicare patient so as to replace the patient's social security number (on their current card) with a new generic number. Your patients have already been told a new card is coming, in

their Medicare bulletins and mailings from Medicare.

Now, some of those same patients are getting calls from alleged Medicare personnel explaining that there was a mixup in the assignment of their new number and they are calling to help the patient. They are told something like "It looks like we may have assigned two different beneficiaries the same new Medicare number on the cards that have been mailed to you. Please go pick up both of your Medicare cards and bring them to the phone and I'll wait".

The patient, believing this is a "Medicare person" does so and returns to the phone and then the caller says "OK, please read the number from your new card" and the patient does it. The caller might say "Oh, wait - that is not supposed to go to you. What is your old Medicare number? They read it to them and then the caller might say "But your birthdate is different than this number shows. What is your birthdate?" Bingo - they now have what they need to do identify fraud and start getting credit cards in your patient's name sent to them.

This is happening and it's been reported on CNN, Fox News, AP and others. Please do your patients a favor and either have something you hand them when they come in telling them that Medicare will NEVER call them on the phone or ask them for their numbers or somehow get the word to them.