

## (The new Medicare cards are expected to be mailed starting April 2018 and completed by April 2019)

This is pretty important to get to people with Medicare, their families and friends or adult kids who help parents with Medicare. Have just gotten word about the newest Medicare scam from an organization I educate for, Texas Senior Medicare Patrol, a division within the Better Business Bureau

Here's what you need to know to protect yourself, family and friends throughout the US.

Starting 4/1/18 Medicare will start a year-long project to replace all current Medicare cards for beneficiaries to convert to alphanumeric ID numbers. Currently the ID number is your social security number.

With identity theft rampant, Congress mandated that Medicare halt the use of Social Security numbers as patient identifiers under the Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act of 2015 (MACRA). The New Medicare Card project (formerly known as the Social Security Number Removal Initiative) was born. An additional incentive for the program is to reduce fraudulent billing to Medicare. Scammers are opportunistic

First of all the new Medicare card will come to you in the mail. You don't need to request it or do anything. It will show up.

### **WHAT'S THE SCAM?**

Somebody from "MEDICARE " will call to tell you you are getting a new Medicare card. But until it comes you will need a temporary card. Fee for the card is between \$5-50 dollars. They want personal information, bank account or credit card so they can process your temporary card.

### **THINGS TO REMEMBER**

Medicare will never call you unless you ask them to. Medicare does all communications by mail unless you ask them to call. Ditto for anybody saying they "work with Medicare to make sure you get everything you are entitled to."

### **Scammer alert**

## **HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF FROM THIS ONE?**

First of all spread the word. Feel free to share these notes. Use your answering machine to screen calls or just don't even answer a number you don't recognize.

If it has happened to you or your friends or loved ones and personal info had been given out (happens considerably more often than you think so don't feel bad or stupid) immediately take action to protect yourself against identity theft.