

Durable Medical Equipment Scams

Have you ever gotten a call from someone claiming to be from Medicare or calling on behalf of Medicare? Did they offer you “free” medical supplies or equipment, such as back braces, knee braces, diabetic supplies or even wheelchairs? This is a scam! Medicare does not call you to sell you products, and there is no such thing as “free”—someone is paying for it, either you or Medicare.

What is Durable Medical Equipment?

Durable Medical Equipment, or DME, are medical supplies that can be reused, such as braces, monitors, wheelchairs, walkers, and so much more. Medicare Part B covers medically necessary DME that is prescribed by your doctor, serves a medical purpose, and can be used in the home. Unfortunately, this is a popular type of Medicare fraud. If suppliers contact you by phone, out of the blue, offering medical equipment or supplies, hang up! If you feel you could benefit from some sort of DME, contact your healthcare provider to have that discussion.

What do I do if I experience this scam?

If you receive calls from people offering supplies in exchange for your Medicare number, just hang up! People may also offer you “free” DME at health fairs or other events in exchange for you Medicare number. Do not accept this offer. If you need DME, your doctor will write a prescription. If you receive DME you did not order in the mail, contact the company directly and send it back. Do not pay shipping for this. Finally, review your Medicare Summary Notices to ensure you’re not being charged for DME you never ordered.

Report, Report, Report!

If you experience a Durable Medical Equipment Scam, report the scam to the Wisconsin Senior Medicare Patrol. We can help you report this type of suspected fraud and also make sure that your Medicare account is safe going forward.

To report Medicare fraud, errors, or abuse, call the Wisconsin Senior Medicare Patrol toll-free at 1-888-818-2611.

