



Division of Insurance

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Senior Medicare Patrol Receives National Awards for Fraud-Busting

Denver — The Colorado Division of Insurance's Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) received three national awards for efforts to combat Medicare fraud. The U.S. Administration on Aging recently handed out the awards at the 2011 SMP National Conference in Washington, D.C.

Efforts by SMP staff to combat Medicare fraud "are a vital part of making sure benefits such as Medicare are available to people who genuinely are entitled to them, and an investment in the future stability of that program," said Commissioner of Insurance, Jim Riesberg.

Colorado SMP received two awards in the Complex Issues category: an award for the state with the highest number of Medicare fraud cases referred for investigation (87), and recognition for the cumulative highest dollar amount referred for further action (more than \$156,000). Once investigated by SMP staff, cases were referred to the appropriate federal entity for further investigation.

SMP is a part of the Senior Health Insurance Program (SHIP), a federally-funded program housed within the Division of Insurance. The purpose of SMP is to provide consumer education on fraud, increase reporting of suspected fraud and abuse, assist consumers in the resolution of fraud and abuse complaints, and ultimately decrease the incidence of fraud and abuse.

SHIP/SMP Director Alice Ierley at the Division of Insurance said SMP has "a particularly skillful team of investigators, educated in what fraud looks like."

The third award given to the SMP is the Volunteerism Award, given for overall increased volunteer program capacity, and according to Ierley is a direct reflection of statewide volunteer training done by SMP staff. More than 100 volunteers were trained in how to root out Medicare fraud in 2010, and they also are involved in public outreach and education efforts.

To volunteer for the Senior Medicare Patrol, or to report fraud, call 1-800-503-5190 or send an email to smp@dora.state.co.us.

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*The **Colorado Division of Insurance** regulates the insurance industry and assists consumers and other stakeholders with insurance issues.*

***DORA** is dedicated to preserving the integrity of the marketplace and is committed to promoting a fair and competitive business environment in Colorado. Consumer protection is our mission.*