

New Medicare Cards that Will Help Prevent Identity Theft Are On the Way

September 27, 2017 - For years we've been telling our readers to be careful about giving out their social security number. But for those on Medicare that's been easier said than done because Medicare identification cards didn't provide an account number. Instead, they simply used your social security number followed by one letter. A quick look back at our archives shows that we been writing about this particular issue since at least 2006. Finally, the federal government is going to do something about it although it will be a few months before they start.

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In April of next year, the government will start issuing new Medicare cards. The new ID number on the front will consist of 11 randomly selected numbers and letters rather than the old format. This will make it much more difficult for scam artists targeting the elderly to get their hands on social security numbers.

The government expects it to take about one year to replace all 54 million cards currently in circulation. The program is expected to be complete in April, 2019. Anyone who is new to Medicare and enrolls after April 2018 should receive one of the new cards immediately.

In the meantime, anyone on Medicare still needs to be careful about whom they share their card with. One thing that the government is warning seniors about is a scam that asks seniors to pay for their new cards. The new cards are free of charge. Anyone attempting to get money for the cards is a crook and should be reported to police.

by Jim Malmberg

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