

Iowa Department of Elder Affairs

Operation Restore Trust of Iowa

What is health care fraud? Fraud happens when someone knowingly and willfully lies in order to get paid. Fraud usually involves careful planning. It happens when a provider misrepresents on the claim form what was furnished. In other words, it's cheating.

What does fraud look like?

- Billing for services or supplies not provided.
- Deliberate application for duplicate payment
- False representation of patient information
- Billing non-covered services as covered services
- Billings for “gang visits” (group visits billed as separate visits) or “wave therapy” (billing for treatment not provided, although the patient was seen / “waved at”)

What is health care abuse? Abuse happens when services are provided that are:

- Inconsistent with sound medical, business or fiscal practice
- Create unnecessary cost to Medicare
- Medically unnecessary

What does abuse look like?

- Over utilized services
- Excessive charges
- Services not medically necessary
- Billing Medicare higher amounts than non-Medicare patients
- Breaches of “assignment” (an agreement with Medicare to accept Medicare-approved charges)
- Exceeding limiting charge amount (limits required when provider does not accept assignment)

Operation Restore Trust of Iowa has a Medicare, Medicaid Concerns Line: 1-800-423-2449

If you:

- have a concern about a bill or service charged to Medicare or Medicaid and
- you aren't sure if the provider is entitled to be reimbursed for what was submitted, please call 1-800-423-2449.

Your call is completely confidential. The phone is answered in person Monday – Friday during regular business hours. Messages may be left at all other times. Your call will be returned promptly.

By calling 1-800-423-2449, you can receive:

- Information & education
- Individual assistance by Fraud Prevention Specialist volunteers to help you decide if the case might be fraud or abuse
- Help to resolve the problem, if possible
- Help referring your case to investigators who will determine whether fraud or abuse actually occurred and seek restitutions, fines and penalties
- Information about the progress of your case
- The satisfaction of knowing you helped fight back

Most health care providers are honest and genuinely trying to follow the many and sometimes confusing Medicare and Medicaid rules. Mistakes happen. Mistakes will not be prosecuted. (Overpayments may be collected.) It will take all of us to fight waste, fraud and abuse. We must work together to restore trust in our public health care programs.