



# SENIOR SCOOP

SERVING TIOGA COUNTY SENIORS

The Senior SCOOP is a bi-monthly newsletter published by Tioga Opportunities, Inc., Department of Aging and volunteer senior citizens for all Tioga County senior citizens.



February-March 2012

## What is Medicare Fraud?



**Fraud** occurs when an individual or organization deliberately deceives others in order to gain unauthorized benefit.

Medicare and Medicaid fraud generally involves deliberately billing for services that were not received, or billing for a service at a higher rate than is actually justified.

### What is Medicare Abuse?

Medicare **abuse** occurs when providers supply services or products that are not medically necessary or that do not meet professional standards.

### Examples of Fraud and Abuse

- Billing for services and supplies that were not provided
- Obtaining Medicare number for “free” services
- Billing for equipment not delivered
- “Upcoding” – improper coding to obtain a higher payment
- Unneeded or excessive x-rays and lab tests; claims for services that are not medically necessary
- Billing for excessive medical supplies
- Using another person’s Medicare card to obtain medical care, supplies or equipment

## Help Stop Medicare Fraud

**Health care error, fraud and abuse affect everyone.**

Last year alone, Medicare lost billions of dollars to improper claims. This affects beneficiaries by wasting Medicare money that could be used to increase and improve health care services **AND** it affects everyone who pays taxes by wasting billions of taxpayer dollars.

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### Prevention Tips

To help prevent Medicare from losing valuable funds, and to prevent inappropriate care, it is important to report all suspected instances of error, fraud and abuse and instruct all Medicare beneficiaries on the following do's and don'ts.

#### DO:

- Use your **Personal Health Care Journal** to keep a record of the dates of Medicare services received
- Review your Medicare Summary Notice (MSN)
  - Did you receive the service or the product?
  - Did the doctor order this service, product or test?
  - Were you billed for the same service more than one time?
  - Is the charge or service related to your condition or treatment?

#### DON'T:

- Give out your Medicare number except to your doctor or other Medicare provider
- Accept "free" medical or other services in exchange for your Medicare or Social Security number
- Give your Medicare number to telephone callers or door-to-door solicitors (Medicare does not call or go door-to-door)

To contact NYS Senior Medicare Patrol, call 1-877-678-4697 Or visit [www.smpresource.org](http://www.smpresource.org)

### Medicare Advantage Disenrollment Period

If you have a Medicare private health plan (also known as a Medicare Advantage plan) you may switch to Original Medicare with or without a stand-alone prescription drug plan during the Medicare Advantage Disenrollment Period (MADP). The MADP occurs every year from **January 1 to February 14**. Changes made during this period will become effective the first of the following month.

### 100 Years & Counting!

We will be honoring Tioga County Centenarians at our Annual Senior of the Year Luncheon on Wednesday, May 16, 2012.

If you know someone who is 100 years of age or will turn 100 this year, please let us know by calling 687-4120, ext. 343.

The Alzheimer's Association conducts an ongoing support group for families on the third Wednesday of each month from 6:30-7:30 PM at the Countryside Community Center, 9 Sheldon Guile Blvd., Owego

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### AARP TAX PREPARATION

The AARP Tax Counselors will be doing Federal and New York State Tax Returns at the Countryside Community Center starting February 1, 2012. This is a free service, please call 607-687-4120 to make an appointment. Be sure to bring the following information so that your return is accurate:

- Your 2010 tax return
- All your W-2, 1099 and 1098 forms (Some may be arriving late in February)
- County, Town and Village property tax receipts
- Summary statements from mutual funds, brokers or financial consultants



Our area is a Federally declared disaster area due to the flooding from Hurricanes Irene and Lee. This means that you can claim a flood loss on your 2011 return, or by amending your 2010 return. The loss is can be calculated both ways to see which produces the lowest tax.

A casualty loss on a tax return must be an expense actually paid by the taxpayer. The taxpayer must complete his FEMA and insurance claims, and any property sales prior to the tax loss deduction.



### DASH Your Blood Pressure!

DASH stands for **D**ietary **A**pproaches to **S**top **H**ypertension. This is an easy great-tasting eating plan that will reduce your blood pressure and perhaps decrease any medication you are taking for that condition. It's a plan that adds foods to your diet rather than taking them away. It was designed for those with high blood pressure, but it is also a heart-healthy plan. Come to the Countryside Café at lunchtime on Tuesday, February 7<sup>th</sup> to learn more. Our resident nutritionist, Rosemarie Oliver MSRD, will be offering tasty samples and recipes of **DASH** foods starting at 11 am. Elaine Carril, RN will also be present to offer blood pressure screenings.

### Meatless Mondays are Moving to Friday for Lent

We have been serving meatless meals on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Mondays of the month. Some of our clients observe Lent and abstain from meat on Fridays so we are moving our meatless meals to Fridays during the month of March. This will also provide more options for those who tire of fish as an entrée.

### WE NEED YOUR HELP

Many of our programs have been affected by changes in Federal and State budgets. Tioga Opportunities, Inc., Department of Aging greatly appreciates any financial contributions. Thank you.

I would like my contribution to go to:

- Use Where Most Needed
- Home Delivered Meals/Nutrition
- Aging Services Programs
- SCOOP

Clip and mail coupon with your contribution to:  
Department of Aging, 9 Sheldon Guile Blvd., Owego, NY 13827



## Hypothermia and Seniors Staying Warm During Cold Winter Months

In most parts of the country, a 60-degree day would hardly count as a cold snap. And yet if a senior citizen lives in a poorly insulated house and keeps the heater off to save money, such a day might be chilly enough to cause a hazardous drop in body temperature. As people get older, their bodies become a little less efficient at regulating heat. And if the body temperature dips below 94 degrees, hypothermia sets in: The person becomes confused, speech is slow and slurred, the pulse weakens, movements become clumsy, and the body often shivers uncontrollably (although some people don't shiver at all). Mainly, this happens because their heart rates have slowed, blood vessels no longer contract as well, and muscle tone and body fat have been lost.

### Symptoms of hypothermia may include:

- Confusion, forgetfulness, or drowsiness
- Difficulty speaking
- Shivering- although elderly adults may not have this symptom
- Slow breathing
- Clumsiness or stiff muscles
- Unusual irritability



### What to do if you suspect hypothermia:

If you suspect someone is suffering from the cold, take their temperature and if it is 96 degrees or below, call 911. While waiting for help the best step to take to warm a person slowly is wrapping them in a blanket, towel or whatever is handy. DO NOT put them in a hot bath or shower or offer alcohol. Do not rub any part of their body since their skin may be fragile. You can also use your own body heat by getting closer to the person.

### To prevent hypothermia:

- Make sure the person is keeping their home warm enough and not set too long at a low temperature in efforts to reduce their heating bill. The thermostat should be set at least 68 degrees to 70 degrees. Even mildly cool homes with temperatures from 60 to 65 degrees can cause mild hypothermia especially in the elderly.
- Make sure they maintain humidity in the home. Use a humidifier, or place pans of water on the stove or radiator.
- Weatherize the home by closing off gaps with insulation and caulking.
- Make sure to keep the neck, head, and hands covered at all times during cold weather.
- Drink plenty of fluids, and avoid alcohol and nicotine.
- Follow a healthy diet. Older individuals burn calories more in the winter due to the body having to create more body heat.
- Encourage the person to exercise as their age and health allows because exercise will promote appetite and make more body heat.
- Wear several layers of clothes rather than a single, thick layer.

Don't forget that you need to stay warm when it's cold outside. Remember that this means knowing if weather forecasts are for very cold temperatures or for windy and cold weather. You lose more body heat on a windy day than a calm day.

Homes or apartments that are not heated enough, even with a temperature of 60° F to 65° F, can lead to illness. This is a special problem if you live alone because there is no one else to comment on the chilliness of the house or to notice if you are having symptoms of hypothermia. Set your thermostat for at least 68° F to 70° F. If a power outage leaves you without heat, try to stay with a relative or friend.

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## Countryside Café February 2012 Menu





MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Menu subject to change	Salad Bar offered Everyday	1 Shrimp Scampi	2 Chili	3 Turkey Supreme
6 Cheese Ravioli	7 "DASH your Blood Pressure" Trout Almondine	8 Chicken Cacciatore	 9 Night Dining Spaghetti & Meatballs	10 Reuben Sandwich
13 Pesto Chicken	 14 Valentine's Day Beef Stroganoff	15 Hot Turkey Sandwich	16 Hungarian Goulash	17 Manicotti
20 Closed for President's Day 	21 Liver & Onions	22 Beef Stew	23 Night Dining Chicken & Biscuits	24 Baked Cod with Herb Crust
27 Stuffed Peppers	28 Macaroni & Cheese	29 Chicken Ratatouille		

Countryside Café: 11:30 AM-12:30 PM\$3.00 Suggested Donation, Age 60+  
\$4.75 Cost, Under Age 60Night Dining: 4:30-6:00 PM2nd & 4th Thursday of each month  
\$4.00 Suggested Donation, Age 60+  
\$5.75 Cost, Under Age 60

## Countryside Café March 2012 Menu



MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Menu subject to change	Salad Bar offered Everyday	 1 BBQ Pork Sandwich	2 Linguini with Clam Sauce	3 Linguini with Clam Sauce
5 Swiss Mushroom Burgers	6 Spinach Lasagna	7 Oven Fried Chicken	8 Night Dining Corned Beef	9 Eggplant Parmesan
12 Spanish Rice	13 Chicken Chow Mein	14 Meatloaf	 15 St. Pat's Day Lunch Boiled Ham Dinner	16 Fish & Chips
19 Cabbage Rolls	20 Macaroni & Cheese	21 Paprika Chicken	22 Night Dining Roast Pork	23 Vegetable Pizza
26 Sloppy Joes	27 Shrimp Teriyaki	28 Turkey Cheesy Bake	29 Swiss Steak	30 Basil Baked Pollack

*We Welcome Gifts In Honor And In Memory*

Remember your friends or loved ones by sending or suggesting a monetary gift to the Department of Aging IN HONOR or IN MEMORY of a relative or friend. We will recognize all such donations in the format requested by the donor (by name or anonymous). These gifts exclusively benefit the many programs we offer senior citizens throughout Tioga County.

In memory of Lois Bentlage from Mr. & Mrs. Doyle Gibbs, Teresa & George Winstead, Kim & Joe Virzi & Family, Mary Grace Bentlage, Carol Bentlage Geedey, Jackie Bentlage Brown, Mary & James McGory, Martha & Doug Heaberlin and Lucy Zahran

In memory of Elizabeth Walker from Angelo Gallo, Kathryn Ingalsbe and Ronald & Ruthann Edwards

**Leap Year**



Julius Caesar was behind the origin of leap year in 45 BC. The early Romans had a 355 day calendar and to keep festivals occurring around the same season each year a 22 or 23 day month was created every second year. Julius Caesar decided to simplify things and added days to different months of the year to create the 365 day calendar, the actual calculations were made by Caesar's astronomer, Sosigenes. Every fourth year following the 28th day of Februarius (February 29th) one day was to be added, making every fourth year a leap year.



**SMOKE DETECTORS AVAILABLE**

The Department of Aging has **Smoke Detectors** provided by the Tioga County Firefighter's Association to be distributed to seniors. They are available one per household, but additional detectors may be purchased for \$5.00 per detector.

If interested please contact Joe at 607-687-4120, ext #314.

"The Connection to the Future of Long Term Care"



Tioga NY Connects is a trusted resource providing free information and assistance on long-term care and more for persons of all ages in Tioga County.

For more information please contact:

Department of Aging  
 Countryside Community Center  
 9 Sheldon Guile Blvd.  
 Owego NY 13827

Call 607-687-4120 or Toll Free at 1-866-352-3680

*Countryside Beauty Salon*  
 at the Countryside Community Center

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Rinse: \$0.75    Cut: \$8

Perm: \$33    Hair Color: \$20

Shampoo & Set: \$8

Shampoo, Cut & Set: \$14

*Cheryl*  
 Tuesday/Wednesday/Friday  
 725-3197

*Georgie*  
 Thursday/Saturday

*Beauty Salon: 687-0450*

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## February



- February 1st-** Christina Olevano will present "Responsible Gaming" at 11:15am
- February 7th-** Rosemarie Oliver will present "Dash Your Blood Pressure" at 11:15am
- February 9th-** Valentine Night Dining, served from 4:30-6:00pm, entertainment by Rich Wilson from 5:00-6:00pm, call for reservations
- February 14th-** Valentine Lunch served from 11:30am-12:30pm
- February 23rd-** Night Dining, served from 4:30-6:00pm, entertainment by Phillips Head



## March

- March 2nd-** Chinese Auction, doors open at 5:00pm
- March 8th-** St. Patrick's Day Night Dining, served from 4:30-6:00pm, entertainment by Pat Kane from 5:00-6:00pm
- March 15th-** St. Patrick's Day Lunch, served from 11:30am-12:30pm
- March 22nd-** Night Dining, served from 4:30-6:00pm, entertainment by The Four Strings Band from 5:00-6:00pm



### Activities at the Countryside Community Center

9 Sheldon Guile Blvd., Owego

Coffee Hour	Mon. & Wed.	8-9:30 AM
Line Dancing	Wed.	12:45-2:15 PM
Bingo	Wed.	10-11:30 AM
Cards/Games	Wed.	1- 4:00 PM
Fitness & Fun	Tues.	4-5 :00 PM
	Fri.	2- 3:00 PM
Ceramics	Mon. & Wed	9-11:00AM
Painting	Tues. & Fri.	9-11:30AM
Knitting	Thurs.	1-3:00 PM
Wii Bowling	Fri.	9-11:30AM

For more information about the Countryside Cafe or entertainment contact:

Bonnie-Lee at 687-4120 ext. 320



**SENIOR SCOOP** - Editorial policy -- The Department of Aging (DoA) reserves the right to review and approve all articles and paid advertising submitted for publication. There are no implied or actual endorsements by DoA of products or services advertised in this publication. Activities sponsored by senior clubs and other senior organizations are printed on a space-available basis. The Department of Aging can be contacted by mail at 9 Sheldon Guile Blvd., Owego, NY 13827

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**Address Changes:** If you have a change of address, even if it is only for a few months through the winter, please remember to let us know. The SCOOP will not be forwarded to another address.

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