

# *News from the Wyoming Department of Health*

Friday, July 13, 2012

## **Department of Health: Avoid Medicaid Scams**

Following a handful of recent reports of suspicious activity around the state related to Medicaid, the Wyoming Department of Health is reminding residents to be cautious when giving out personal information to an unknown person.

Wyoming Medicaid representatives are hearing of situations involving individuals who claim to be affiliated with Medicaid and who ask older adults for personal information or try to convince them to purchase something they claim Medicaid will pay for.

“Wyoming Medicaid should only need your personal information if you have applied for a specific Medicaid program or service,” said Kim Latta, Medicaid programs coordinator with the Wyoming Department of Health. “A Medicaid representative rarely if ever would come to your home and would never show up unannounced.”

Latta noted that if residents apply for Medicaid to pay for services in the home, in an assisted living facility or in a nursing home, a public health nurse will come to do an assessment. “In these cases you would be notified in advance the nurse is coming,” she said.

Latta suggested steps to take if someone comes to the door claiming to be representing Medicaid and asks for personal information:

- 1) Ask for the person’s full name and the agency he/she works for.
- 2) Ask to see the person’s government-issued ID.
- 3) Write down the person’s name and contact information or ask for a business card.

“There are cases when individuals representing reputable organizations do help with filling out forms,” Latta said. “It’s important you understand why they are asking for the information.” Latta advised calling the agency to verify the person’s identity **BEFORE** providing personal information. It is recommended to call the number for the organization published in the phone book rather than a number given to you by the individual.

“Again, anyone coming to your home to help you apply for Medicaid will have called you in advance and will be coming at your request,” Latta said. Other points to keep in mind:

- \*No one has to let a person in the home just because they knocked on the door.
- \*If a salesman comes to the door who has not been invited, do not open the door.
- \*Once someone is inside the home, it can be difficult to get them to leave.
- \*If someone will not leave, consider calling local law enforcement.
- \*If potential criminal activity is suspected, consider calling local law enforcement.

To report suspicious activity by someone claiming to work for Wyoming Medicaid, please call the Medicaid Fraud Hotline at 1-855-846-2563.

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