

Did You Know? Fraud on the Run  
Volunteer Spotlight  
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Caring for Kupuna, their Families and Caregivers

May 2021 The Department of Health/Senior Medicare Patrol Hawaii Working For You



# Kukui Gram

*The Kukui Nut (Candlenut) is highly revered as the Hawaii State Tree. Kukui symbolizes light, using its oil in lamps to bring light to darkness. Kukui means "enlightened," representing wisdom, protection and peace.*

We proudly present our debut issue of *Kukui Gram*, designed for Medicare beneficiaries and their families. Our mission is to "empower and assist you to prevent, detect and report healthcare fraud, errors and abuse through education and counseling."

Scams are increasing every day. Learn how to protect your money and personal information. Build strong supports for you and your loved ones. Always be aware and be vigilant!

*Kukui Gram* was created to help our kupuna. It takes a village to raise a child, but it takes an entire state to protect our beloved kupuna. Please send us your stories to share!

Mahalo,

Norma Kop, SMP Hawaii Director

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This project was supported, in part by grant number 90MPPG0053, from the U.S. Administration for Community Living (ACL), Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, D.C. 20201. Grantees undertaking projects under government sponsorship are encouraged to express freely their findings and conclusions. Points of view or opinions do not, therefore, necessarily represent official ACL policy.

## Did You Know? Fraud on the Run

The highest losses by fraud and scams costing anywhere from a median amount of \$436 to \$1,300 is suffered by kupuna ranging in ages from 60 to 80 and over.

Besides COVID vaccine scams, one of the fastest growing schemes is ZOOM PHISHING which directs you to click on a link so that malicious malware or *Malware* will be downloaded on your device to steal your personal data and hack into your other accounts to steal your money and identity.

The ever popular Grandparents scams are alive and well with more elderly victims falling prey and sending cash to spring a grandchild out of jail after being arrested on a DUI charge during a college break on the mainland.

Scammers are as smooth as ice at flattery or *hoomalimali* when they get you on the phone and compliment you with a line like, "You sound so young...like you're 20 years younger."

Your money is gone when you respond to a scammer and send payments through untraceable ways like wire transfers (MoneyGrams, Western Union transfers), Bitcoin (ATMs), or just cold hard cash wrapped in paper or tin foil.

**When in Doubt, Who You Gonna Call?  
SMP Hawaii - Always at your Service!**

**SCAM ALERT** If you get a call, text, email or even someone knocking on your door claiming they can get you early access to the COVID-19 vaccine, **STOP!** It's a scam! Don't pay for a promise of vaccine access or share personal information. Instead, report it immediately to SMP Hawaii.

## Volunteer Spotlight: Becka Yoshikawa

**Becka Yoshikawa** joined SMP Hawaii as a Volunteer in November 2020 and wasted no time providing her help. She retired from Kamehameha Schools, after 25 years of service in Human Resources and brings strong administrator skills, community-building and teamwork, having also worked at Queen's Healthcare System, Hilton Hotels and JC Penney. Becka provides her expertise in training and presentation, administrative support and more.

*"I wanted to give back to my community in a way that would make both an immediate and lasting impact. SMP Hawaii's focus on educating older adults, their 'ohana and caregivers on protecting themselves from losing their money, assets and all that they've worked hard for really resonated with me. SMP truly helps people prevent healthcare fraud, errors and abuse. I'm enjoying my time learning about Medicare, receiving news directly from resources I never had and making new friends while using my skills to help others."*



## Calendar of Events

**Happy Mother's Day! May 9**

### 20/21 Webinar Series: Spring-Summer

*CMS: Assisting Hawaii's Senior Fraud Squad*

Peter Bauer, Regional Liaison & National Training Program Lead  
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

May 17-18  
10:15 - 11:15am

*B-SAFE: BOH Senior Awareness of Financial Exploitation*

Brian Ishikawa  
Senior Vice President and Director of Corporate Security, Bank of Hawaii

June 21  
10:15-10:45am

*Hawaii Partners Against Fraud: Is This For Real?*

Faye Miyasaki  
Investigator, Bank of Hawaii

June 22  
10:15 - 10:45am

*Threats and Trends: Training for Success*

Gloryana Akapo  
Acting Investor Education Specialist, Securities Multi-Media Education  
Specialist & Hawaii LifeSmarts Assistant Coordinator - Business Registration Division  
Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs

June 22  
10:50 - 11:20am

**To Join any of these Zoom Meetings, Click on the Link Below**

<https://zoom.us/j/3124825354?pwd=MHE4Y0pDWHIZenZCcmRKcjRCaS9Gdz09>

**Meeting ID: 312 482 5354    Passcode: 2021**

## Ask the Experts

**FAQ: What if I lost my Medicare card?**

Call 1-800-Medicare (1-800-633-4227). Contact SMP Hawaii for assistance, including setting up your online medicare.gov account.

**FAQ: How do I replace my Medicare card?**

If you need to replace your card because it's damaged, sign in or create an account on MyMedicare.gov to print an official copy of your Medicare card.

If you need to replace your card because you think that someone else is using your number, call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). TTY users can call 1-877- 486-2048.

## Updates: Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program

Long-term care facilities have reopened their doors to visitors as Hawaii's COVID-19 vaccination rate increases. Visitation policies vary, with facilities determining the number of visitors a resident may have, the location of the visit (preferred choice: outside), the length of the visit and how frequently they may occur.

Long-term care ombudsman volunteers resumed their weekly visits to their assigned facilities and report good news from residents they have spoken with. Residents say they are pleased to have meals in the dining rooms (even though distanced from others) and spending time with their loved ones again.

Volunteer ombudsmen are needed more than ever to advocate and be a voice for residents who do not have family members or those who need help resolving concerns about their care. If you are at least 21 years old and interested in being a voice for kupuna, please call (808) 223-0468 or email [lynn.niitani@doh.hawaii.gov](mailto:lynn.niitani@doh.hawaii.gov)



The Federal Trade Commission Western Regional Los Angeles Office will provide virtual educational presentations this summer on fraud cases and prevention, consumer protection and more. Please stay tuned for details.

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**Next Issue: August 2021**