The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Inspector General is alerting the public about fraud schemes related to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19).

Scammers are offering COVID-19 tests to Medicare beneficiaries in exchange for personal details, including Medicare information. However, the services are unapproved and illegitimate.

Fraudsters are targeting beneficiaries in a number of ways, including telemarketing calls, social media platforms, and door-to-door visits.

These scammers use the coronavirus pandemic to benefit themselves, and beneficiaries face potential harms. The personal information collected can be used to fraudulently bill Federal health care programs and commit medical identity theft. If Medicare or Medicaid denies the claim for an unapproved test, the beneficiary could be responsible for the cost.

Protect Yourself

Beneficiaries should be cautious of unsolicited requests for their Medicare or Medicaid numbers.

Be suspicious of any unexpected calls or visitors offering COVID-19 tests or supplies. If your personal information is compromised, it may be used in other fraud schemes.

Ignore offers or advertisements for COVID-19 testing or treatments on social media sites.

A physician or other trusted healthcare provider should assess your condition and approve any requests for COVID-19 testing.

If you suspect COVID-19 fraud, contact National Center for Disaster Fraud Hotline (866) 720-5721 or email at disaster@leo.gov https://oig.hhs.gov/coronavirus/fraud-alert-covid19.asp

Amblin’ for Alzheimer’s is different this year and you’ll read more about it on page 2, spoiler alert: it involves posting pictures on Facebook and on Instagram that bring joy, because we really need it right now. Here’s a great post on our Amblin’ for Alzheimer’s Facebook Group by Jackie Brunton:

“This is a picture of my beautiful mother, Dorothy, long before this wretched Alzheimer’s disease took hold. She loved being at Big Lake and in the boat. Mom suffered with this disease for almost 20 years before she passed. I could not have gotten through it had it not been for all the services provided by this incredible organization, education, support groups, training classes. They certainly provided me with the tools I needed to be a better caregiver!”

Thank you, Jackie, for sharing this beautiful story with us!
Applying for Disability with Alzheimer’s
By Cendy Moliere

Alzheimer’s normally occurs in adults eligible for standard Social Security retirement benefits. When Alzheimer’s is diagnosed before the age of full retirement it qualifies for disability benefits from the Social Security Administration (SSA). With early-onset Alzheimer’s you can potentially receive benefits through either or both of SSA’s disability programs: Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI*) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI*). These programs provide income and funds for some health-and supportive-care costs.

Medically Qualifying for Benefits with Early Onset Alzheimer’s
- Early-onset Alzheimer’s meets SSA’s medical eligibility requirements for receiving disability benefits. You must complete the application with sufficient medical records, but medical approval is almost certain. Approval takes a long time (5 months to 4 years).

SSA maintains standard disability listings to determine medical eligibility. The listings are in the Blue Book,* because (Cont.) page 4

Amblin’ for Alzheimer’s Goes Virtual

Amblin’ for Alzheimer’s, our fundraising walk normally held in Anchorage has to be different this year (obviously). We’ve turned it into a “Virtual” campaign where people “amble” where they are (to stay safe) and how they want. They can amble inside or outside, walking or in a wheelchair, in a group (6 feet apart from each other), swimming, on a motorcycle or dog sled, in a boat, amble through a knitting project…be creative! We don’t care how you amble as long as you’re having fun.

You may register to Amble here: https://www.alzalaska.org/amblin-for-alzheimers-2020, then join our “Amblin’” Facebook Group and share photos/videos of you amblin’: https://www.facebook.com/groups/881878355557640

Prizes will be given….airfare for two anywhere Alaska Airlines flies for the team captain whose team raises the most money, an apple watch for the team captain whose team raises the second most money, and an apple watch for the team captain with the most registered amblers!

We will also be giving prizes for the photos posted on the Facebook Group. Early bird posters on the Facebook page’s names will be put in a hat and three will be drawn for gift certificates for 10 Breakfast Burritos from Sal’s New York Grill (You’ll have to schedule their pick-up date with Sal if you win). We’ll have a “people’s choice” prize and others as we get closer to the end of the campaign.

Contact Francy Bennett at fbennett@alzalaska.org if you have questions!
Dear Friends,

What a challenging, worrying time we’re experiencing together. I hope all of our friends are well, are adjusting to the mandates that have us hunkered down and staying at home. But importantly, I also hope that each of you knows we at Alzheimer’s Resource of Alaska are continuing to conduct our work from one end of our great state to the other. Dementia, and the need for long term services and supports among all whom we serve, doesn’t ease up even in the face of a pandemic.

Our staff are primarily working from home, where they are on the phone or video conferencing from their computers. In this way, they conducting classes, engaging in one-on-one consultations, providing caregiver coaching, delivering excellent care coordination, and facilitating support groups. Rest assured, if you or someone you know needs our help, we are here.

Not only have our programs gone live online, but our annual fundraising walk, Amblin’ for Alzheimer’s, has changed into a virtual campaign. We invite you to do something that brings you joy for Amblin’ in lieu of the actual walk. You can get the whole story on page 2.

Some of our staff are involved in assisting clients navigate the Social Security (SS) process in the face of a difficult, disabling diagnosis. Cendy Moliere, a SS Outreach specialist, offers tips to make the process as streamlined as possible, acknowledging it can take from 5 months to years for approval for benefits. You’ll find her article on page 2.

We also recommend to you Rachel Bylsma and Carrie Keil from Senator Dan Sullivan’s office. They are part of Senator Sullivan’s Constituent Services team, dedicated to helping Alaskans navigate Federal agencies like Social Security, VA, Medicaid, and Medicare among others. They can submit an inquiry with a federal agency on your behalf, help you communicate with them, request a reconsideration for your case and help you get basic information. You can find their services through www.sullivan.senate.gov/contact/locations.

With heartfelt wishes for your safety and health,

Pamela Kelley
Executive Director

Care Coordinator, Liz Smith, Honored

Our outstanding Care Coordinator Liz Smith has been selected to receive the award as the Direct Service Professional of the Year in the Alzheimer’s Disease and Related Dementias/Elder Services category for this year’s Full Lives Conference! Her clients have been lucky to have her advocating on their behalf for many years. Our team has valued her assistance as an excellent mentor with a wealth of knowledge. As one who nominated her said “This lady is an angel, always happy and smiling, helpful, caring. It is obvious that she loves her job and her clients. We consider ourselves very lucky and blessed that Liz Smith has been assigned as my mom’s care coordinator.”
Applying for Disability with Alzheimer’s (Cont. from page 2)

Alzheimer’s usually affects people over the age of full retirement you won’t find a disability listing for the disease. You can still get benefits. Instead, you’ll qualify through SSA’s Compassionate Allowances (CAL) program. Have your doctor review the CAL medical evidence requirements* and send your records to SSA promptly. SSA needs a report from your primary doctor, psychiatrist, or neurologist documenting your diagnosis and the progression of the disease. Disease progression must be rated through a standardized testing method, like Clinical Dementia Rating.

SSA also needs a “functional report” completed by you, a family member or caregiver, describing how the disease affects your daily life and abilities. The application for benefits asks for the name of the person who SSA can contact about the functional report. This person will receive a questionnaire covering the information necessary for SSA to make an evaluation. Applying for Benefits - Disability benefits may include SSDI and/or SSI, dependent on your situation. SSDI is a program for disabled workers, while SSI is available to applicants with limited income and other financial resources, regardless of work history. Here are the applications:

SSDI applications can be made online or at the local SSA office. https://www.ssa.gov/disabilityssi/


A friend, family member, social worker, Social Security advocate, or attorney may help you file for benefits. Negotiating The Application Process - First, fill out the application then wait 3 to 5 months for SSA to determine your eligibility for disability. Only 35% of applicants are approved in the first filing. The rest may file for reconsideration, which takes 3-5 months and only 17% are approved. https://www.ssa.gov/forms/ssa-561.html

If that doesn’t work, present your case in front of a judge at a disability hearing. It may seem daunting, but it’s your best bet for approval. Over 50% of all applicants are approved during a hearing. You will be questioned by a judge, a disability examiner, and a vocational expert. You may be represented by a disability advocate or attorney at any stage of the process, but it should be most beneficial here. It can take a very long time to schedule a hearing, it takes two years on average.

We don’t recommend pursuing a claim after a hearing. If denied, you can appeal a case to an appeals council, but this just sends you to another judge, which could take years to schedule. If denied by the appeals council you can go to federal court, but the approval rate is abysmal and you must hire legal help for federal court claims.

Tips For Approval - Because the disability approval rate is so low at the initial application, you’re likely wondering how to speed it up. There’s no sure-fire way to get approved, but the following tips may increase your odds:

Never leave a field blank on the application form. Some questions may not seem relevant but being as descriptive as possible helps. This is especially important when it comes to the final page of the application.
Individual & Business Contributors
These contributions received between January 1 - March 31, 2020

Acuff Associates  Frontier Health Services  Ruth McHenry
Jimmy Adames     Lindsey Galin        Chanda Mines
Oscar Alexie      Sapphire Healthcare  Andrea L Morris
Helen Allen       Transportation       Bob & Helen Morris
Allstate Foundation Susan Guers       Mike & Anita Moseley
Anchorage Lodge   Gutso Express       MTA Foundation
      #1534 Loyal Order       Bernard & Inge D
      of Moose           Nelsen
ASD Charitable Giving  Thomas J & Nancy
                      Hallinan
Audiology Associates  Shirley M Henley
Shirley A Bennett    Cliff & Kathy Heus
Edward L Bray       Ronald S Horvath
John & Jackie Brunton        David Howe
Robert Burke         Catherine N Irwin
Larry A & Marie D Burton     Peggy A Jackson
David Anthony & Patti Ann Cole  Bobby & Sharon Janeway
Carolyn L Coller & Jeff R Stone  Gregory A & Sally A
Catherine Coon       Jerich
Eric & Joanna Burke       Olivia Jewell
Croft
Sandra K Desmond       Frank J & C Kathleen
John Drady            Johnston
Lawrence K & Geraldine A Duffy  Joseph Paul Josephson
Greg & Shari Durocher        Rosemary A Karish
Roger & Ann Dyer       John J & Eleanor J Kelley
Dr. Charlotte Eaton     Virginia Kelly, Rep Payee
J D Edge & Susan Baxted-Edge for Maria Lourdes
Tom & Ann W Farris      Navarro
Brian Fay              Larry J or Roxann
Fraternal Order of Eagles #1037 *       Kopischke
Fairbanks
Fraternal Order of Eagles Ladies Auxiliary #1971
Anchorage Lodge
      #1534 Loyal Order of Moose
ASD Charitable Giving Campaign
Audiology Associates
Shirley A Bennett
Edward L Bray
John & Jackie Brunton
Robert Burke
Larry A & Marie D Burton
David Anthony & Patti Ann Cole
Carolyn L Coller & Jeff R Stone
Catherine Coon
Eric & Joanna Burke
Croft
Sandra K Desmond
John Drady
Lawrence K & Geraldine A Duffy
Greg & Shari Durocher
Roger & Ann Dyer
Dr. Charlotte Eaton
J D Edge & Susan Baxted-Edge
Tom & Ann W Farris
Brian Fay
Fraterna...
Applying for Disability with Alzheimer’s (Cont. from page 4)
called “Notes.” It’s a blank page for you to go into details about how the disease affects your ability to work.

List more than one disability. While Alzheimer’s may be your primary disability, mentioning other illnesses you’ve been diagnosed with and are seeking treatment for is important. Conditions like obesity or high blood pressure should be listed, as they’ll factor into your case.

Ask your doctor to fill out a Residual Functional Capacity (RFC) evaluation for you. The SSA often uses the RFC to determine the extent to which someone is physically disabled.

Keep in contact with the SSA. Check your claim’s status by making a MySSA account at www.ssa.gov, call SSA every two weeks to check for changes in your application’s status and ask if they have everything they need to make a decision.

Update the SSA on changes to your condition at any point in the application process before the hearing. If your condition worsens, the SSA needs to know because it may increase the likelihood of approval. You can submit new medical information by phone.

In general, the more specific you are when describing how your disability prevents you from performing work you’re qualified to do, and have done in the past, the higher your likeliness of qualifying. Once you are through the process, you can focus on what is important: your health.

Cendy Moliere is an Outreach Specialist for the Social Security Administration to help you understand the process.

Resources:
Alzheimer’s Resource of Alaska: https://www.alzalaska.org/
SSDI: https://www.disability-benefits-help.org/ssdi/qualify-for-ssdi
SSI: https://www.disability-benefits-help.org/ssi/qualify-for-ssi
Evidence Requirements: https://secure.ssa.gov/poms.nsf/lnx/0423022385
Apply Online: https://www.ssa.gov/benefits/disability/
Local SSA Branch: https://www.disability-benefits-help.org/social-security-disability-locations

Celebrating Life’s Great and Small Moments (Cont. from page 4)
When her memory faded, I told her she couldn’t cook anymore because we were afraid for her safety. When we went to Alzheimer’s Resource of Alaska my mother’s energy seemed more vibrant, she gained the zest for life. She was always excited to go to her group classes. She is also thankful for the assistive devices ARA provided for her via a mini-grant.

What I have now are not just memories, but moments I celebrated the joy of living with my mom. One day, she held my hand, looked into my eyes and said, “Thank-you, anak (son).” That moment more than compensates for everything. Looking back, those months I fully assisted mom, count as the best moments in my life. When I grow old, I know I have done something that few children had the opportunity to do for their parents- to serve and show them how we love them.

In Honor & Memory of
Art Carroll
William F & Theresa P Lorkowski

Arthur Lionel Carroll
Sandra K Desmond

John & Jackie Brunton
Dorothy Magette

Audry Roberts
Pamela R. Kelley

Ronald A Jackson
Peggy A Jackson

John Owens Jr
Carolyn L Coller & Jeff R Stone

Wesley Pruitt
Bobby & Sharon Janeway
## Caregiver Support Groups

### Statewide
- **Caregiver Support Groups**
  - **Statewide**
  - **Every 1st Saturday**, 1-2 pm
  - **Every 3rd Wednesday**, 1-2 pm
  - Dial-in using 1-877-216-1555, Code 927989#. For additional information, contact Gay Wellman, 822-5620 or 800-478-1080 x5

### Anchorage
- **Every 4th Thursday**, 5:30-7 pm
- CONTACT: Debbie Chulick, 561-3313

### Eagle River
- **Every 2nd Thursday**, 5-6:30 pm
- CONTACT: Debbie Chulick, 561-3313

### Fairbanks
- **Every 2nd Tuesday**, 4:30-6 pm
- **Every 3rd Tuesday**, 1:00-2:30 pm
- CONTACT: Joan Adams, 452-2277

### Homer
- **Every 2nd & Every 4th Thursday**, 2:30-3:30 pm
- CONTACT: Pam Hooker, 235-7655

### Ketchikan
- Call for current schedule.
- CONTACT: Bernice, 255-8080

### Kodiak
- **Every 4th Thursday**, 12:30-1:30 pm
- CONTACT: 486-6181

### Mat-Su Valley
- **Every 1st Friday**, 10-11:30 am
- CONTACT: Kim Jung, 746-3413

### Seward
- **Every 4th Thursday**, 1-2 pm
- CONTACT: 244-5604

### Sitka
- Call for current schedule
- CONTACT: 747-4600

### Soldotna
- **Every 2nd and Last Tuesday**, 1-3 pm
- CONTACT: Judy Warren, 262-1280

### Talkeetna
- **Every 1st Monday**, 10-11:30 am
- CONTACT: Kim Jung, 746-3413

### Willow
- **Every 1st Monday**, 1:30-3 pm
- CONTACT: Kim Jung, 746-3413

### Statewide Caregiver Webinars
- Connect via Zoom; please register for link.
- **To register, contact Gay Wellman:** 822-5620 or gwellman@alzalaska.org

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Title</th>
<th>Date &amp; Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facebook Live “Pop-up” Memory Café</td>
<td>Monday, 4/20 12-12:30 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication Tips for Caregivers</td>
<td>Monday, 4/27 12-1:30 pm or 5:30-7 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Savvy Caregiver</td>
<td>Tuesday’s, 5/5 - 6/9 5:30-7:30 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honoring Connection Communication and Dementia</td>
<td>Monday, 5/11, 1-2:30 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overview of Dementia</td>
<td>Monday, 5/18 10-11:30 a or 5:30-7 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downsize &amp; De-clutter</td>
<td>Monday, 6/1 10-11:30 am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vascular Dementia</td>
<td>Monday, 6/8 1-2:30 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choices, Options and Opportunities</td>
<td>Monday, 6/15 10-11:30a or 5:30-7 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthy Body Healthy Brain</td>
<td>Tuesday, 6/16, 5:30-7 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activities of Daily Living</td>
<td>Monday, 6/22, 1-2:30 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driving &amp; Dementia</td>
<td>Monday, 6/29 12-1:30 pm or 5:30 - 7 pm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Mind Matters
- **Mind Matters**
  - Wednesdays, 5/27-7/14 10:30am-12:00 pm
  - Thursdays, 5/28-7/16 1-2:30 pm

### Brain Works I
- **Brain Works I**
  - Wednesdays, 5/27-7/14 1:30 pm - 2:30 pm

### Brain Works II
- **Brain Works II**
  - Thursdays, 5/28-7/16 10:30 am - 11:30 am

### Memory Café
- **An opportunity for persons living with dementia and their care partners to socialize and enjoy entertainment with peers. No registration required.**
- Thursday, 5/14 1 pm
- Thursday, 6/11 1 pm
- Thursday, 7/9 1 pm

### Professional Webinars
- **Professional Webinars**
- Connect via Zoom; please register for link.
- **To register, contact Amber Smith:** 586-6044 or asmith@alzalaska.org

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Title</th>
<th>Date &amp; Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intro into Dementia</td>
<td>Wednesday 5/6 10:30-Noon or Saturday 5/9 1-2:30pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being a Friend</td>
<td>Wednesday, July 8, 10:30-Noon or Thursday, July 11, 1:00 pm - 2:30 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honoring Connection: How to Improve Communication</td>
<td>Wednesday, 6/10 10a-12pm or Thursday, 6/13 1-2:30pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reliable Health Information</td>
<td>Tuesday, April 21 Noon - 1:00 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using Plain Language: Tools for Making Health Information Clear and Effective</td>
<td>Tuesday, May 19 Noon - 1:00 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behaviors that Challenge Us</td>
<td>Tuesday, May 26 Noon - 1:00 pm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Amblin' for Alzheimer's 2020

Where you are
How you want

REGISTRATION & DETAILS: WWW.ALZALASKA.ORG