



**NEWS COLUMN – Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc.**

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Contact: Jenni Lewis, Community Outreach

F32-URG PO Box 500

Rio Grande, OH 45674

Phone: 1.800.582.7277, ext. 224

E-Mail: [jlewis@aaa7.org](mailto:jlewis@aaa7.org)

Website: [www.aaa7.org](http://www.aaa7.org)

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**New Medicare Cards are Coming!**

**Pamela K. Matura, Executive Director, Area Agency on Aging District 7**

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The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) are starting to mail new Medicare cards to all people with Medicare. The new cards will have a new unique Medicare number instead of a Social Security number. New cards are automatically being mailed to the beneficiary addresses on file with the Social Security Administration.

The new cards will help to keep information more secure and help protect against identity fraud. Cardholders will receive a new Medicare number that is unique to them. The new card will not change coverage or benefits. Cards are being mailed in waves. Starting in April 2018, those with Medicare will be able to check the status of card mailings in their area on [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov). Timeframe for Ohio to receive cards is after June 2018.

After receiving a new card, people with Medicare are advised to take three steps to make it harder for someone to steal their information and identity:

1. Destroy your old Medicare card.
2. Use your new card right away. Doctors, other health care providers, and plans approved by Medicare know that Medicare is replacing the old cards and are ready to accept the new cards.
3. Beware of people contacting you about your new Medicare card and asking you for your Medicare Number, personal information, or to pay a fee for your new card. If you think someone is trying to steal your identity or otherwise commit fraud related to the new Medicare cards, you can report them to your local Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP). In Ohio, you can call 1-800-488-6070. Or visit [www.proseniors.org/ohio-smp/](http://www.proseniors.org/ohio-smp/)

Just a reminder as well that our Agency is available to help with Medicare questions. Those who are interested can call our Agency toll-free at 1-800-582-7277 or e-mail [info@aaa7.org](mailto:info@aaa7.org). We can assist with Medicare Part D sign-ups, provide help with finding a Medicare supplemental insurance, and assist those who qualify for extra help with Medicare premiums and co-pays. Our Agency can also provide information about other services made available through our Agency, and offer references to community organizations that may be able to help a loved one remain at home longer.

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