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ATTORNEY GENERAL URGES SENIORS TO WATCH FOR FRAUD AS THEY RECEIVE NEW MEDICARE CARDS

HONOLULU – Attorney General Russell Suzuki joins the U.S. Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS) and the State Executive Office on Aging, to alert the public to be on the watch for fraud relating to the issuance of new Medicare cards. The new cards will be arriving in mailboxes shortly and it is a time that unscrupulous individuals may try to take advantage and scam money from unsuspecting seniors. Medicare recipients should know the facts and take steps to protect themselves.

Things you should know to help you keep your new card safe:

- The new Medicare cards began rolling out to Hawaii Residents via US mail, since the last week in May, and residents will continue receiving them through July.
- Multiple cards to one household may arrive at different times.
- Your new card will not include your social Security number, gender, birthdate or signature.
- Medicare will not call you about your new card.
- The new cards are free. There is no cost to you.
- To ensure delivery, update your current address with the Social Security Administration at: (ssa.gov/myaccount, or call them toll free at 1-800-772-1213)
- The only thing changing is the way your card looks. Your Medicare benefits will remain the same.
- Once you receive your new card, you should destroy your old card.

Attorney General Suzuki said, “Be cautious with any communication regarding the new Medicare cards, so you don’t fall victim to scams that will cost you money and aggravation. Never share or confirm your Social Security number or Medicare number with anyone who contacts you by phone, email, or in person, unless you have given the person permission to contact you in advance. You should report any suspected scam or fraud immediately.”

Capt. Tom Duran, RPh, Pacific Area Representative for Hawaii and the Territories, CMS, stated, “The new cards are different in many ways, including that they will not include your Social Security number, but you continue to get the same benefits. If you

receive the new card and have questions about the card or your benefits, contact us at: 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227).”

Kaipolani Cullen, Volunteer Coordinator for the Senior Medicare Patrol at the State EOA added, “Our goal is to make the rollout of the new cards worry-free. We are standing by to help any kupuna who feel they need assistance if they feel intimidated or taken advantage of by someone calling about their Medicare card.”

Please contact Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) Hawaii if you or someone you know comes across any suspected fraud or related scams at: 586-7281, or toll free at 1 (800) 296-9422. This is a free and confidential service.

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