

# SEPTEMBER 2023



## Fraud Fighters In Action



### OHIO SMP contributed cases to this conviction!

A Florida nurse practitioner was convicted this week by a federal jury for her participation in a \$200 million healthcare fraud scheme.

Elizabeth Hernandez, 45, “signed thousands of orders” for orthotic braces and genetic tests that were medically unnecessary and billed to Medicare, the Department of Justice (DOJ) said in a release announcing the conviction.

Hernandez was sent pre-filled orders for these products from telemarketing companies, which had already convinced Medicare beneficiaries to put in requests for the tests and equipment, law enforcement said. Hernandez signed off on the orders despite never having met or spoken with the patients, they said.

“In 2020, Hernandez ordered more cancer genetic tests for Medicare beneficiaries than any other provider in the nation, including oncologists and geneticists,” the DOJ said. “She then billed Medicare as though she were conducting complex office visits with these patients, and routinely billed more than 24 hours of ‘office visits’ in a single day. Hernandez personally pocketed approximately \$1.6 million in the scheme, which she used to purchase expensive cars, jewelry, home renovations, and travel.”

Read article:

<https://www.fiercehealthcare.com/regulatory/florida-nurse-convicted-fraudulent-orders-billing-medicare-200m>

# MEDICARE OPEN ENROLLMENT

**October 15 – December 7**

As usual, scammers come out of the woodwork this time of the year. Make sure to remind beneficiaries of the following scams:

- Medicare Annual Wellness Checks
- “New” Medicare cards
- Ads and offers of various Medicare plans with “too good to be true” offers

If Medicare beneficiaries receive contact over the phone or via any other form of communication regarding the aforementioned offers, advise:

**IT IS A SCAM. HANG UP. Medicare IS NOT CALLING.**

If Medicare beneficiaries have questions about Medicare plans, open enrollment and anything insurance, direct to:

**OSHIIP contact information: 800-686-1578.**