



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

May 19, 2023

**Lewis County Health System Warns Residents of Spoofing Calls**

LOWVILLE, NY— Lewis County Health System officials were recently notified that some patients are receiving spoofing calls from scammers posing as representatives from the hospital or one of the health system's affiliated clinics/physician practices. The hospital wants to notify their patients and community members that this is a scam using Caller ID "spoofing," a high-tech manipulation of the Caller ID feature that allows the scammer to disguise their identity by making the phone number appear to be that of the hospital.

The scam callers are asking for private Medicare/insurance information, confirmation of your doctor, and other personal data like your birthday and social security number. As with all scamming calls, if you have any doubt about the authenticity of a call, it is okay to hang up or ask the scammer for a callback number, as often this will result in the scammer hanging up. Please do not give any personal information to the scammer.

Scammers sometimes go one step further when callers answer, saying the patient's doctor referred them. The scammer then tries to lure consumers into sharing their Medicare or social security number, along with additional information, which can then be used for fraudulent Medicare claims for durable medical equipment such as knee braces, canes, or a glucose monitor at no out-of-pocket cost to the consumer.

"One scammer told a patient if they didn't provide the requested information Medicare would cancel their insurance. You should know that Medicare will not cancel the insurance," stated Health System spokesperson Christina Flint.

When in doubt, it is best to check with the source directly. If you receive a call that you feel needs to be validated, call your physician's office directly or the main hospital phone at 315-376-5200; if you have questions about a bill, you may contact the LCHS billing office at 315-376-5210 to verify. Staff would welcome your return call and understand your hesitation.

In addition, the following resources are available to report a scam. If you encounter a scam call, hang up and report the call to the Federal Trade Commission at 1-877-FTC-HELP or online at [www.ftccomplaintassistant.gov](http://www.ftccomplaintassistant.gov).

###