

U.S. FORUM CONNECTION #122, FEBRUARY 2014

This publication is intended for your information about issues important to education, women and children. How you choose to use the information included here is up to you.

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HUMAN TRAFFICKING

There are currently several hundred bills under consideration in this session of Congress which address human trafficking in some way. The majority of these bills address sexual exploitation of trafficked victims particularly those under the age of 18. The Violence Against Women Act is aimed at punishing those who prey upon women. Other legislation under consideration deals with reporting, identifying or studying the problem. Additionally, a number of organizations seek to address the situation in some way. Some of these groups are Operation Polaris which is mainly aimed at education of the public about the insidious ways in which trafficking affects victims. FAIR Girls takes a multipronged approach by sponsoring educational workshops on the subject and also providing services to victims in the U.S and other countries. One of these services provides occupational therapy and counseling to victims. Jewelry made by victims is for sale to the public and is available through <http://fairgirls.earthcare.com/>. Part of the money raised through sale of jewelry is used to finance counselling for victims.

A CRITICAL MEDICARE ISSUE

(This problem was recently covered in an NBC Evening News segment.)

Question: What is the difference between simply being **“admitted”** to a hospital and **“admitted for observation”**? Answer: Possibly thousands of dollars!

“Admitted for observation” is not covered by Medicare Part A because this is not considered a traditional hospital admission. If, as a result of this classification, a patient requires rehabilitation, not only is the hospital stay not reimbursable, but any rehabilitation costs are not covered by Medicare either. Also, medication prescribed while in the hospital when **“admitted for observation”** is not covered by Medicare Part D (prescription drug coverage). Finally, if the patient **“admitted for observation”** is subsequently admitted to a nursing home, the cost of the nursing home care may not be

covered or reimbursed; because the person was not considered to have been admitted to the hospital.

If you or a loved one is admitted to a hospital, the status “admitted” or “admitted for observation” is determined by the admitting doctor when the patient enters the hospital. Failure to get this clarified IMMEDIATELY during the admission process can be extremely expensive. Even if the status is changed from “admitted for observation” to “admitted” after the patient enters the hospital, there can be dire financial problems.

For more information on this subject go to <http://www.medicareadvocacy.org/> which is the site of The Center for Medicare Advocacy, Inc. and/or <http://www.kaiserhealthnews.org/Stories/2013/May/03/lawsuit-challenges-observation-rules-in-Medicare.aspx>. The Center for Medicare Advocacy can be reached by telephone at [\(860\) 456-7790](tel:8604567790). A New York Times blog estimates that “the number of seniors entering the hospital for observation [increased 69 percent over five years](#), to 1.6 million in 2011.”

FORUM FACEBOOK PAGE LINK

For those of you desiring discussion of legislative topics there is a U. S. Forum Facebook page online at <http://www.facebook.com/DKG.US.Forum>

FORUM WEB SITE <http://bit.ly/DKGUSF>

CONTACT ADDRESSES FOR GOVERNMENT INFORMATION

U.S. GOVERNMENT CONTACT INFORMATION can be obtained through Congressional Switchboard [1-866-327-8670](tel:18663278670) [this is a toll free number]. You can contact your Congressman and Senator through this number without paying long distance charges.

<http://www.house.gov/> for members of the House of Representatives <http://www.senate.gov/> for members of the U.S. Senate
White House [1-202-456-1111](tel:12024561111)

FIVE CONSTITUENT CONTACTS WILL CAUSE A LEGISLATOR TO PAY SERIOUS ATTENTION TO A GIVEN ISSUE.