

NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Alberta Blue Cross® reminds Alberta seniors to be vigilant against potential fraud

With recent reports of a new scam attempting to defraud seniors by promising health care payments, Alberta Blue Cross is reminding seniors to be vigilant against fraud.

All Albertans aged 65 and older are eligible for the Coverage for Seniors program administered by Alberta Blue Cross on behalf of the Government of Alberta, and thousands of seniors also complement their government-sponsored coverage with supplementary plans from Alberta Blue Cross.

“Alberta Blue Cross will never contact seniors—or any of our members—asking for personal or financial information to provide a ‘payment’ to them, whether by text, email or phone,” says Brian Geislinger, vice-president of Corporate Relations at Alberta Blue Cross. “Anyone who receives a suspicious request and has concerns should contact our Customer Services.”

Alberta Blue Cross recently worked with the Alberta Injury Prevention Centre to publish a booklet for older adults, called *Keeping Well*, that includes two pages of practical tips to help Alberta seniors avoid becoming the victim of fraud.

Fraud is the number one crime against older Canadians. Criminals often target seniors as they may have more money, can be more trusting and are home during the day to answer the door or phone. Online, email and text scams have become increasingly common. Common types of scams include free items or vouchers; fake competitions; free money from the government; tax rebates and refunds; and pension and investment scams.

Tips to help older Albertans protect themselves from fraud and scams include the following:

- Never give out money or personal information to someone over the phone, at the door or in an email unless you can confirm the identity of the person or organization you are speaking to.
- Don't respond to emails that look suspicious, or open any links or attachments associated them. Emails can be made to look like they came from a person or organization you know.
- Don't click on pop-up windows—you can safely close the window.
- Don't sign agreements or contracts without giving yourself time to think it over—this includes limited-time offers.
- Request proof of identity or check references before hiring someone or agreeing to have them work on your home.

Victims of fraud may feel embarrassed, think the amount of money they lost is too small to worry about or worry they might not get their money back. Regardless of the situation, individuals who think they've been scammed should always report it to local authorities. Not only can law enforcement help these individuals but reporting fraud can also stop someone else from being scammed.

Keeping Well is available for download at findingbalancealberta.ca/resource-catalogue/ and additional resources, including a list of scams and information for reporting fraud, is provided by [The Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre](#). Alberta Blue Cross also has a number of resources related to fraud, including [fraud protection tips from the Chartered Professional Accountants of Canada](#), [how to catch a phish](#), [examples of COVID-19 related fraud](#) and an entire [website section dedicated to benefits fraud](#).

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