



## Committee reviews health of Medicare databases and compliance audits

The Department of Human Services will appear before Parliament's Public Accounts Committee as part of its investigation into two Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) audits on Medicare.

ANAO Report No. 27, *Integrity of Medicare Customer Data*, found that the management of Medicare data has not been fully effective in maintaining the integrity of data in the Consumer Directory, a long established database containing all Medicare customer records.

Committee Chair, Dr Andrew Southcott MP, said that "the Audit Office reported that at least 18,000 possible duplicate enrolments were in the Medicare customer database."

"Given the 29 million database entries, this is not statistically significant but such a discrepancy has implications for the privacy and clinical safety of Medicare patients. This and the so-called 'intertwined' records, where two individuals with the same name may have shared data, mean that compromised database records are of concern to both the Committee and the community", Dr Southcott said.

The second Medicare audit report under review, ANAO Report No. 26, *Medicare Compliance Audits*, examined a compliance program that ultimately cost more than the amount it recovered.

The ANAO found that the effectiveness of Human Services' management of Medicare compliance audits has been mixed. Human Services' administration of Medicare compliance audits and its implementation of the Budget measure, the Increased Medicare Compliance Audits initiative, demonstrated a range of shortcomings that detracted from the department's performance in delivering these elements of its broader Compliance Program.

"The Budget provided \$76.9 million to Human Services for Medicare compliance audits over four years for an estimated \$147.2 million return in savings. However, only \$18.9 million was recovered from these audits at a net cost to government", Dr Southcott said.

**PUBLIC HEARING: Thursday, 17 July 2014 from 10.45am–11.45am, Committee Room 2R1, Parliament House, Canberra.**

More information about the hearing can be found at the Committee's website <http://www.aph.gov.au/jcpaa>. **The hearing will be broadcast live at: [www.aph.gov.au/live](http://www.aph.gov.au/live)**

**For media comment:** please contact Committee Chair, Dr Andrew Southcott MP, on 0413747351 (Matthew Hee).

**For information about the inquiry and public hearing:** please contact the Committee Secretariat on (02) 6277 4615, email [jcpaa@aph.gov.au](mailto:jcpaa@aph.gov.au), or visit the Committee website <http://www.aph.gov.au/jcpaa>.