



# Author of Podger review of health to attend Health Funding Inquiry

## *Parliament House, Canberra – 31 May 2006*

The author of the Podger review of Australia's health system, Andrew Podger, will give evidence to the House Health and Ageing Committee tomorrow (31 May 2006) as part of a parliamentary inquiry into health funding.

Mr Podger is a former secretary of the Commonwealth health department and Public Service Commissioner. More recently, Mr Podger headed a taskforce established by the Prime Minister to examine how to improve the delivery of health services in Australia.

The Committee's terms of reference require that it "inquire into and report on how the Commonwealth government can take a leading role in improving the efficient and effective delivery of highest-quality health care to all Australians".

Committee chairman, Alex Somlyay, said that it was important for the Committee to hear from Mr Podger about reforming health funding arrangements.

"Mr Podger has previously highlighted what he thinks are a number of significant structural problems with Australia's health funding arrangements. The public hearing provides an opportunity for the Committee to question Mr Podger about his proposals to address the emerging challenges for the Australian health system, including handing all health funding to the Commonwealth and encouraging private health insurance to act as a competitive alternative to the public system," Mr Somlyay said.

Mr Somlyay noted that the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) would meet shortly to consider ways to improve Australia's health care system. "Unlike the COAG review, our inquiry gives organisations and individuals outside government an opportunity in a public process to express their views about Australia's health care system," Mr Somlyay said.

### **Venue: Hearing Room 1R2, Parliament House, Canberra**

The program for **Wednesday 31 May 2006** is as follows:

- 9.15am Mr Andrew Podger
- 10.15am Close

#### **For media interview with the Chairman:**

Please contact Mr Somlyay's office on (02) 6277 4727.

#### **For a copy of the terms of reference and further information on making a**

**submission:** Contact the Committee secretariat on (02) 6277 4145, 0421 051 837 (mobile), or email [haa.reps@aph.gov.au](mailto:haa.reps@aph.gov.au) or visit the website at <http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/haa/healthfunding/index.htm>