

Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs

BUDGET ESTIMATES - 2 JUNE 2011 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Human Services Portfolio

Topic: Professional Services Reviews

Question reference number: HSW 6

Senator: Back

Type of question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 22 July 2011

Number of pages: 1

Question:

Medicare Australia is capable of referring cases to the Professional Services Review.

- a) How does it determine which cases should be referred on for further review by this body?
- b) Does it use a statistical matrix?
- c) If so, provide a list of issues that trigger a referral?

Answer:

- a) Medicare Australia's compliance program includes reviews of health professionals through the Practitioner Review Program.
Medicare Australia initially undertakes data analysis to identify where a health professional's claiming patterns are significantly different to that of their peers.
The health professional is given an opportunity to respond to Medicare Australia's concerns through an interview, in which they may provide reasons explaining the difference between their claiming profile and that of their peers.
Upon completion of a review under the Practitioner Review Program, a health professional may then be referred to the Professional Services Review for further consideration if concerns of inappropriate practice are not addressed.
- b) Medicare Australia uses data analysis tools to identify health professionals whose claiming profiles differ significantly to those of their peers.
- c) A referral to the Professional Services Review is triggered where concerns of inappropriate practice remain unaddressed at the completion of the interview.
Inappropriate practice is defined as the rendering or initiating of services that would be unacceptable to a body of the health professional's peers, including the provision of services that are not clinically necessary, the provision of excessive numbers of services and ordering excessive numbers of tests.