

Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs

BUDGET ESTIMATES - 2 JUNE 2011 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Human Services Portfolio

Topic: Medicare Australia Fraud – *The Age* Article

Question reference number: HS 22

Senator: Fierravanti-Wells

Type of question: Hansard page 86–87

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

Number of pages: 1

Question:

Senator FIERRAVANTI-WELLS: I will provide you with some copies of an article in the *Age* from the end of 2009 in relation to two Melbourne hospitals, Northern Hospital and Ballarat Health Service. The article states, ‘Sources within those hospitals say public outpatients are being sent to private clinics for scans or pathology tests.’ The article is about the investigation, and obviously the Commonwealth spokesperson has made a comment, the inference being that there would be some investigation of the matter. Could you take this question on notice? I would appreciate it if you did undertake an investigation and provide details of the outcome of that investigation in relation to any reported action as opposed to what may be referred to in the article?

Ms Golightly: Yes.

Answer:

Information Privacy Principle 11 of the *Privacy Act 1988*, as well as section 130 of the *Health Insurance Act 1973*, set legislative restrictions which preclude Medicare Australia from providing information about specific investigations.