

Part B Insider (Multispecialty) Coding Alert

OIG Saves Medicare \$30 Billion In 2004

Despite a slew of new responsibilities under the Medicare Modernization Act, the **HHS Office of Inspector General** says it is confident that its enforcement duties will not be compromised.

According to the OIG's 2004 semiannual report, the agency recouped almost \$30 billion through recommendations, investigative efforts and audit recoveries.

More than 3,000 entities and individuals were excluded from federal [health care programs](#). This number includes more than 500 convictions and 268 civil actions. The OIG cited significant investigations from the durable medical equipment industry - particularly power wheelchairs - and record recoveries from pharmaceutical companies.

However, in a message preceding the report, acting IG **Daniel Levinson** concedes the future may be less-than-rosy for the cash-strapped agency.

"With funding from the Health Care Fraud and Abuse Control Program statutorily capped at the fiscal year 2003 spending level, balancing the work this office traditionally has done with new oversight responsibilities posed by the MMA presents a unique challenge," Levinson said.

To read the report, go to www.oig.hhs.gov/publications/docs/semiannual/2004/SemiannualFall04.pdf.