

Part B Insider (Multispecialty) Coding Alert

You Could Soon Face a Turbo-Charged OIG

With new Medicare legislation stepping up the number of providers and contractors - and potential fraud - where is the matching increase for the HHS Office of Inspector General?

That's just what Rep. Pete Stark (D-Calif.) wants to know in a Feb. 6 letter to HHS Secretary Tommy Thompson. In a showing of "strong support" for similar requests from Sens. Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa) and Max Baucus (D-Mont.), Stark nixed the present budget, which contained no increase in money for fraud and abuse enforcement and decreased the staff for the agency.

The money should come from the \$1 billion set aside for implementation of the new Medicare law, the letter says. More money should also be allocated to state health insurance assistance programs in order to adequately educate beneficiaries on the new Medicare legislation.