



Senior scooter suspicions

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Those popular senior citizen scooters advertised on TV at “little or no cost” in fact cost taxpayers plenty in illegitimate Medicare reimbursements, according to a government report. What's also exposed is how a massive federal entitlement, already headed toward insolvency, is so easily gamed.

The report by the Department of Health and Human Services inspector general found that just one company claimed Medicare reimbursements totaling more than \$27 million for power wheelchairs and scooters for clients who might not have met medical requirements.

Out of 200 clients, auditors found that 154 didn't meet medical standards, The Washington Times reports. Some didn't even come close.

In response, the company said the IG “influenced the medical review,” according to The Times.

Unfortunately the preposterous process for reimbursement extends far beyond just scooters.

Benefits should go to prequalified clients, who can then shop for the best prices, says Chris Edwards, a budget analyst with the Cato Institute. Under the existing system, improper payments represent up to 20 percent of Medicare's expenditures, Mr. Edwards says. And that doesn't bode well for an entitlement that's projected to start running deficits, ultimately reaching insolvency by 2030.

There's no such thing as Medicare services “at little or no cost.” The fact is, everyone pays.