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7 June 2011

PCEHR Feedback
Department of Health and Ageing
GPO Box 9848
Canberra ACT 2606

Draft Concept of Operations relating to the introduction of a Personally Controlled Electronic Health Record (PCEHR) system

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the *Draft Concept of Operations Relating to the introduction of a Personally Controlled Electronic Health Record system*.

The Australian and New Zealand Society of Palliative Medicine (ANZSPM) is a specialty medical society that facilitates professional development and support for its members and promotes the practice of palliative medicine. Our members are medical practitioners who provide care for people with a life threatening illness.

ANZSPM supports the AMA submission dated May 2011.

Our society thinks that a PCEHR would be extremely valuable in a variety of situations. For example, many patients are transferred to hospices with insufficient medical information and cannot provide all of the details themselves as they are either too sick, have an extremely lengthy and complex history, or in some circumstances, are unaware of key pieces of information. A comprehensive PCEHR would assist in these situations.

The PCEHR would be a logical place for an Advance Directive to be stored, or for that matter, decisions regarding organ donation. Vital information on medication regimens, allergies and the presence of Implantable Cardiac Defibrillators or other prostheses could all be contained in such a record, which would have the potential to make our medical practice safer, better tailored to the individual patient and hopefully more efficient. Currently, much time is spent chasing these important details.

We believe that the whole health record should be available to all health practitioners; otherwise it will be incomplete and not useful. In particular, it seems counter-intuitive and potentially dangerous for there to be a hidden part to the record.

Other health practitioners should be able to input health information – perhaps in a section separate to, but linked with, the medical record.

We look forward to hearing about progress regarding the implementation of a PCEHR system. Please forward correspondence to Ms Marita Linkson, Executive Officer, ANZSPM, email: executive@anzspm.org.au, ph. 0458 203 229.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Good", is centered on a light-colored rectangular background.

Dr Phillip Good
President