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UGPA calls on Government to address clinical utility of the PCEHR as an urgent priority

Australia's general practice (GP) leaders are calling on the Government to heed concerns raised by GPs regarding the significant clinical utility issues associated with the Personally Controlled eHealth Record (PCEHR) system and address them as an urgent priority.

At a recent United General Practice Australia (UGPA) meeting in Canberra, representatives of the GP sector unanimously agreed that the focus of the PCEHR needs to be redirected to clinical utility and standardisation to ensure seamless clinical adoption.

Significant issues have been identified and currently there is no alignment between consumer registration and meaningful use through engagement of the clinical community and assurance of improvement of patient health outcomes.

In August 2013 a number of key clinical leads resigned from National E-Health Transition Authority (NEHTA). This was amidst ongoing concerns and requests for NEHTA and the Department of Health and Ageing (DoHA) to review the PCEHR development cycle and re-establish meaningful clinical input.

Since August, DoHA has become the PCEHR system operator and opportunities for clinical engagement have been less clear.

UGPA is calling on Government to implement strategies to ensure the PCEHR is best structured to improve the health outcomes of all Australians. The process should be profession led and include:

- GP input at every level of the PCEHR development life cycle; including planning through to implementation
- Ensuring the system is clinically safe, usable and fit for purpose
- Supported by an acceptable, and robust legal and privacy framework
- Secure messaging interoperability is a critical dependency priority.

E-health and the PCEHR have the potential to transform Australia's health system and provide superior, safer and more efficient healthcare to all Australian patients. UGPA members believe that this potential will only be fully realised if there is meaningful clinical engagement at a grassroots level.

The Government has announced it will review implementation of the PCEHR. UGPA supports the review and look forward to contributing to the review and expect that the clinical voice and the concerns raised will be heard.

ENDS

UGPA comprises the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP), the Australian Medical Association (AMA), the Australian Medicare Local Alliance (AMLA), the Australian General

Practice Network (AGPN), General Practice Registrars Australia (GPRA), the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM), and the Rural Doctors Association of Australia (RDAA).

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