



Media statement

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PEAK BODIES JOIN FORCES ON EHEALTH COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

Australia's peak digital health and health information organisations met at HIC 2015 this week and agreed they would take a united position on the importance of health informatics expertise for the Australian Council for eHealth (ACeH).

The Health Informatics Society of Australia (HISA), Australasian College of Health Informatics (ACHI) and Health Information Management Association of Australia (HIMAA) agreed the similarities in their respective positions on ACeH membership merited a joint approach.

The announcement came as Federal Health Minister Sussan Ley told HIC delegates today the Government valued their individual efforts.

"You are a good source of information, advice and input as the government progresses the MyHealth Record," Minister Ley said at HIC in Brisbane.

ACHI President, Associate Professor Klaus Veil, HISA Chair Dr David Hansen and HIMAA President Sallyanne Wissmann believe in a coordinated approach. Together, the three bodies represent unparalleled expertise in digital health, health informatics and health information management.

"Our three organisations believe that the current implementation of the PCEHR does not realise the benefits originally sought and expected," said ACHI President Klaus Veil.

"We share the concern that without effective and knowledgeable governance by the proposed ACeH, the goals originally envisaged for the PCEHR will not be achieved," said HISA Chair David Hansen. "This level of governance cannot be achieved without representation from both the health informatics and health information management peak bodies."

"We would welcome the opportunity to work with the Department on improvements to the PCEHR that would enhance achieving the common goal of better healthcare for all Australians," HIMAA President Sallyanne Wissmann said.

The Government recently called for submissions on proposed changes to legislation and governance of the PCEHR.

A joint submission by HIMAA and HISA was based on a survey of combined memberships and stakeholder networks. With more than 350 respondents HIMAA and HISA found that more than 90% of respondents either 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that the proposed ACeH Board and its advisory committees should include both health informatics and health information management expertise alongside healthcare providers, health care consumers and IT systems providers/innovators.

On this basis the two peak bodies recommended:

HISA and HIMAA both strongly recommend to the government that health informatics and health information management expertise be present at all levels of governance within ACeH. The skill sets, knowledge base and experience of health informatics and health information management professionals is critical to the success of e-health initiatives.

In their submission, ACHI's academic fellows and members identified 30 recommendations they believe will enable the originally planned benefits of the PCEHR to be realised. The three recommendations regarding the proposed ACeH directly support the findings of the HIMAA/HISA survey:

That the Department consider that ACeH's brief include data governance and mandating compliance with any one or sets of Australian technical standards by a given date and that Consumers also be represented.

That the Department ensure a suitably qualified statutory authority such as ACeH effectively advise the COAG Health Council on national eHealth policy.

That the Department consider including senior expertise in health informatics, system architecture, networking, semantic interoperability, health data, system evaluation/testing/credentialing, etc. in the governance of ACeH.

ACHI, HIMAA and HISA will jointly continue to pursue a common approach on the membership and governance of the proposed ACeH with the common goal of an effective national electronic health record as an enabler of better healthcare for all Australians.

For more information:

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About ACHI

The Australasian College of Health Informatics is the professional body for Health Informatics in the Asia-Pacific Region. The credentialed Fellows and Members of the College are national and international experts, thought leaders and trusted advisers in Health Informatics. ACHI sets standards for professional practice and education in Health Informatics, supports initiatives, facilitates collaboration and mentors the community. The Fellows and Members of the College are widely involved in e-Health research, standards development, system design and implementation work in Australia, the region and globally.

For more information see <http://www.achi.org.au/>

About HISA

With a 20+ year history, the Health Informatics Society of Australia Ltd (HISA) is **the peak body for health informatics & e-health in Australia**. We have a vested interest in growing workforce capacity and capability in health IT and are passionate advocates for the e-health enabled transformation of healthcare.

HISA is a not-for-profit, member organisation with a broad and diverse stakeholder community with over 1000 active members and a database of over 13,000 committed participants in digital health, e-health and health informatics. We have access to the best minds in e-health nationally and globally including: IMIA (which links HISA to WHO & over 60 specialist health informatics organisations across the planet), APAMI (Asia Pacific Association for Medical Informatics) and HINZ (Health Informatics New Zealand).

HISA membership is open to individuals and organisations. The majority of HISA members are senior players and leaders in their fields. Together, our membership represents thousands of years of combined experience in health and in health-IT.

For more information see <http://www.hisa.org.au/>

About HIMAA

The Health Information Management Association of Australia Ltd (HIMAA) is **the peak body for health information management professionals in Australia**. It has been serving the health information management profession since 1949.

Health information management professionals apply their knowledge and skills to create, acquire, analyse and manage information to meet the medical, legal, ethical and administrative requirements of the health care system. ANZSCO recognised occupations include health information managers (HIMs) and clinical coders (CCs). They hold the information systems key to the integration of patient records and funding flow in efficiency as well as effectiveness improvements to patient care.

The Association promotes and supports health information management professionals as the universally recognised specialists in information management at all levels of the healthcare system. We do this through positioning and advocacy, accreditation, education and training, certification and credentialing, quality standards, publications and resources, and HIMAA membership networking activities at local and national levels, including an annual national conference of international standing.

HIMAA is committed to improving the health of all Australians through professional information management.

For more information see <http://himaa2.org.au/>