

Bettina McMahon
Chief Operating Officer
Australian Digital Health Agency

8th July 2018

RE: Funding of My Health Record integration for allied health

Dear Bettina,

I am writing on behalf of Allied Health Professions Australia (AHPA) and the broader allied health sector to seek clarity about the Australian Digital Health Agency's intentions in regard to supporting conformant software access to My Health Record for allied health practitioners. I note the Agency's recent decision to fund nine specialist software vendors to fund integration with My Health Record and the ongoing lack of vendors in the allied health sector with My Health Record integration.

AHPA is very grateful for the Agency's ongoing commitment to working with us to improve awareness of My Health Record in the allied health sector. We value our relationship with the Agency and the opportunity to work constructively to further uptake of My Health Record and other digital health initiatives. However, this work is challenged by a strong perception in the allied health sector that the Agency and Australian government do not value allied health involvement.

AHPA has for some years argued that working to provide access to My Health Record through existing allied health software products is an essential part of supporting allied health participation in digital health initiatives. We've provided information about subscriber rates for various allied health CIS products showing that there are products with significant market reach, far greater than other products that have been able to access Agency funding. Yet we are not aware of any work to support those products to develop My Health Record integration.

This stands in stark contrast to the vendors most recently funded—Best Practice, Genie Solutions, Medical-Objects and Zedmed—each of which have previously received funding from the Agency/NEHTA and are already conformant with My Health Record. While we recognise the benefit of product improvements and a greater focus on specialist functionality, it is disappointing that conformant products are re-funded while our sector continues to be excluded. We are particularly disappointed that Best Practice appears to be funded to further develop its primary product rather than building conformance in their allied health product, Best Practice Allied (formerly My Practice).



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While we understand the need to prioritise limited government funds, we argue that a coherent plan for supporting the development of My Health Record integration for allied health products with appropriate market share is essential and urgently required. We ask that you make an immediate commitment on behalf of the Agency to developing a plan and timeline for supporting the allied health software market that will lead to genuine participation opportunities in digital health initiatives for allied health practitioners.

Sincerely,

Claire Hewat
CEO, Allied Health Professions Australia

About Allied Health Professions Australia

Allied Health Professions Australia (AHPA) is a collegiate body consisting of 20 national allied health associations members and a further five affiliate members with close links to the allied health sector. AHPA's members collectively represent over 120,000 allied health professionals who work across the primary, acute and tertiary sectors in Australia.

AHPA believes that it is vital that allied health professionals have the opportunity to work alongside the medical and nursing communities to help shape and implement the health care system of the future. Allied health professionals represent almost a third of the country's health care workforce and deliver over 200 million health services annually.

Allied health professions provide crucial support for people experiencing disability, chronic illness and a wide range of other health issues. Access to allied health services continues to be significantly lower in rural and remote regions leading to poorer health outcomes. By ensuring that allied health services are fully accessible across the country will we ensure that Australia has an integrated, comprehensive health care system which delivers world class health care.

Please visit www.ahpa.com.au for further information about our organisation and work.