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MINISTER FOR HEALTH

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20th February 2012

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"E" Health Records Enquiry,
c/o Health Minister Tania Pliasek, MP,
Parliament House
Canberra. A.C.T. 2600.

Minister for Health		24 FEB 2012	
<input type="checkbox"/> Reply by <input type="checkbox"/> Minister <input type="checkbox"/> Chief of Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Adviser	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Acknowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Response <input type="checkbox"/> Phone Call <input type="checkbox"/> Information	<input type="checkbox"/> Urgent by <input type="checkbox"/> Department <input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Refer to <input type="checkbox"/> Campaign <input type="checkbox"/> Consultant <input type="checkbox"/> Background <input type="checkbox"/> Information <input type="checkbox"/> Request <input type="checkbox"/> Comments

Dear Minister,

I write to support the plan for Electronic Health Records. In 2006 my husband died. A stroke in 1975 left him disabled and when he died following a brain haemorrhage, he was suffering from Alzheimer's. We have no family. For ⁽³¹⁾ years I made all appointments, sought aides for the disabled, and did all our finances, shopping, planning, driving, cooking, cleaning, gardening and home maintenance. I kept medical records and informed doctors, therapists, hospitals and government and other institutions the history and current details about his condition and his wishes and needs. It was for me to retell the story over and over (dates etc.) which became increasingly difficult for his memory to retrieve.

The brain haemorrhage in 2006 was sudden. He had (immediately) no speech. By the time we got to hospital there were no responses. It was for me to make decisions as my husband and I were unable to communicate in any way, at all.

After the immediate grief, I prepared an Advanced Care Directive. My concern was that my wishes and

history would not be known if I was unable to communicate. I attend a Medical Centre and a public hospital. My G.P. of many years closed his practice and no G.P. in my area will "bulk-bill" me. The Medical Centre does not want my medical records given to me by the ex-G.P.

I am 73 years old. I suffer from asthma, blood pressure, cholesterol, thyroid and Vaso-vagal-automatic nervous system disorder. I take medication for some of the above.

If I collapse and am taken to hospital I hope the records I carry with me will be found. It is risky - I fear lying in hospital unable to communicate my wishes, history, donor wishes and that a Catholic Priest should be notified.

I cannot express the relief I felt when I heard that all my records could be available wherever I am taken.

I apologize for the length of this submission.

I support wholeheartedly and unconditionally the registering of all details of my medical history, medications, Advanced Care Directive, organ donation, without access conditions at all.

My husband would have supported this too.

I hope you will pass my letter to the Enquiry and I hope your plans and work for the Australian medical system are realized.

Thankyou,

Yours sincerely,

Synedra O'Neill