

11 September 2018

**Submission to:
The Senate Community Affairs Reference
Committee on the My Health Record Amendment
(Strengthening Privacy) Bill 2018**

Letter of support – Hepatitis Victoria

To whom it may concern,

As the CEO of Hepatitis Victoria and on behalf of the organisation, I am writing to endorse our support for Hepatitis Australia's submission to *The Senate Community Affairs Reference Committee on the My Health Records Amendment (Strengthening Privacy) Bill 2018*.

Hepatitis Victoria are one of eight state and territory hepatitis organisations across Australia, and the peak not-for-profit community organisation in Victoria advocating for people affected by or at risk of viral hepatitis. We work across the state to raise awareness and prevent transmission of viral hepatitis. We also offer a number of programs to educate, promote wellbeing, and increase the capacity of others to respond.

The Australian Government's Department of Health and the Victorian State Government's Department of Health and Human Services have separately released strategies that set bold targets to eliminate both hepatitis B and hepatitis C by 2030. The most significant challenge outlined in the strategies is the stigma and discrimination commonly experienced and associated with viral hepatitis.

Whilst we acknowledge the intended benefits of the My Health Record for consumers and public health, there remain several gaps in the system (namely those outlined in the submission relating to privacy, data protection, and stigma) that should be revised and enhanced before we can have full confidence in promoting it to people involved in the work of our organisation.

Hepatitis Victoria has been consulted during the development of the submission and our position on the matters raised are reflected throughout.

Regards,

MELANIE EAGLE
Chief Executive Officer,
Hepatitis Victoria