

13 September 2018

Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committees on Community Affairs
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Committee Secretary,

Re: CHF response to My Health Records Amendment (Strengthening Privacy) Bill 2018

Thank you for the opportunity to give the Consumer Health Forum's response to the My Health Records Amendment (Strengthening Privacy) Bill 2018. CHF welcomed the Government's announcement that it will amend the My Health Record Act to strengthen safeguards to protect security and certainty of personal medical records.

CHF strongly supports and advocated for the Government's planned amendments to the legislation to ensure no MHR record can be released to police or government agencies, for any purpose, without a court order and to ensure that if any Australian wished to cancel their record, they could do so permanently, with their record fully deleted from the system and no longer accessible to law enforcement or government.

To meet the intent of the legislative amendments, it is CHF's view that the legislation must be passed before the end of the opt-out period, and that ideally no records should be created following the opt-out period until it is possible in practical terms for a consumer to fully delete a record.

Although the Australian Digital Health Agency's policy has been clear and categorical that no documents have been released in more than six years and that no documents will be released without a court order, enshrining this policy intent in legislation adds clarity and certainty to MHR safeguards.

CHF supports My Health Record as an important health infrastructure investment that will benefit the great majority of consumers, particularly those with chronic complex conditions, families with children and older Australians and we recognise that the more the MHR system is used by consumers and healthcare providers, the greater the benefits. However, MHR will only succeed in realising these

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benefits if it is used by a critical mass and if the community can trust that patient information is secure and only seen by those authorised to do so. This legislation helps assure that trust.

Yours sincerely,



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Chief Executive Officer

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