

February 28, 2011

Andrew McGowan,
Inquiry Secretary
Standing Committee on Infrastructure and Communications
P O Box 6021,
Parliament House,
Canberra, ACT 2600

Email: ic.reps@aph.gov.au

Dear Mr McGowan

I write on behalf of The Australian Society for Medical Research (ASMR) to comment on the new inquiry into the National Broadband Network (NBN). In particular, Item B) "Achieving Health Outcomes".

The Australian Society for Medical Research (ASMR) is the peak body representing health and medical researchers in Australia. Through more than 1,500 direct members and affiliations with 80 specialist societies, medical colleges and patient groups, the ASMR network reaches an additional 140,000 Australians involved, or having an interest in, health and medical research (HMR). Our mission is to foster excellence in Australian HMR and to promote community understanding and support of the sector through public, political and scientific advocacy.

ASMR fully supports initiatives that are focused on improving the nation's health outcomes. We believe that the NBN will provide opportunities for:

- 1) the population to be better informed about their own health
- 2) better and more broad use of e-health technologies

While we acknowledge the need for Australia's communication systems to be fast, efficient and effective, health outcomes, health advice, information and prevention strategies are underpinned by the HMR sector where government investment is declining in real terms. The NBN can facilitate some opportunities for better health outcomes but it is appropriate and sustained investment in the sector which will bring about long term health reform.

Yours sincerely,

Emma Parkinson-Lawrence, PhD
President, ASMR