

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**

**ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO**

**Budget Estimates 2013-14, 5/6 & 7 June 2013**

**Question: E13-113**

**OUTCOME:** 10 - Health System Capacity and Quality

**Topic:** Outages

**Type of Question:** Written Question on Notice

**Senator:** Boyce

**Question:**

- a) In responses to previous questions about the PCEHR and outages, NEHTA has always insisted that it manages to keep the PCEHR up 98.9% of the time and that this is perfectly acceptable – an industry standard. Can you provide evidence of where in any modern western medical system that this is regarded as acceptable - a system that is out of action at least 4 days a year?
- b) In fact shortly after we received NEHTA's response to our last WQON in regard to outages – I- NEHTA announced that a planned systems outage of 25 hours duration would occur that weekend. You can't really be suggesting that in crucial health matters having the PCEHR out of service for 25 consecutive hours is any way acceptable?

**Answer:**

a) and b)

As with any system, including hospital applications, planned outages are required to allow the deployment of system upgrades and new functionalities. Planned outages are scheduled when system usage is likely to be low. The Personally Controlled Electronic Health Record (PCEHR) system availability target of 99.5 per cent is similar to targets set for other Australian government and hospital systems, and also the Singapore eHealth record system. The Accenture contract has a range of performance standards that are aggregated to measure their performance each month including the measures for outages. The systems availability target is 24 hours per day, 7 days a week with 99.5 per cent systems availability outside of planned outages.