

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2011-2012, 19 October 2011

Question: E11-469

OUTCOME 10: Health System Capacity and Quality

Topic: EHEALTH – PERSONALLY CONTROLLED ELECTRONIC HEALTH RECORDS
INCENTIVES

Written Question on Notice

Senator Boyce asked:

Take recent by the RACGP: "We are... concerned that the current plan doesn't offer any incentives for GP's and urges the government to consider how this additional effort will be acknowledged. "We would like to see amendments to the Medicare Benefits schedule to recognise the additional work load GP's will undertake in consultations initiating and maintaining the patients shared health summary and other elements of the PCEHR" Dr Bennett said. And this from the Rural Doctors "many rural doctors are already working long hours and struggle to keep their practices economically viable. Given this, they may be reluctant to participate in the PCEHR system without appropriate incentives for the time they will have to spend creating and updating the electronic records"

Given that the Health Ministers has explicitly ruled out any financial incentives, how do you then get the cooperation of enough doctors to make this work?

Answer:

The Department of Health and Ageing funds the National E-Health Transition Authority (NEHTA) to engage clinicians and professional bodies, in the development of the personally controlled electronic health record (PCEHR) system to understand the needs of clinicians and ensure the system is designed and built in a way that best meets their needs, minimises any additional burden and maximises the benefits of clinical its use.

The Department has also engaged a National Change and Adoption Partner (NCAP) to develop a national change and adoption strategy and delivery plan; to undertake a range of engagement and communications activities across the health sector to encourage uptake of the system by health professionals and consumers. The NCAP is working in collaboration with health care professionals, software vendors, NEHTA and the Department to successfully deliver the PCEHR Program, including training materials and guidelines.