

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2011-2012, 19 October 2011

Question: E11-475

OUTCOME 10: Health System Capacity and Quality

Topic: EHEALTH – PERSONALLY CONTROLLED ELECTRONIC HEALTH RECORD SECURITY

Written Question on Notice

Senator Boyce asked:

For some time computer experts have expressed alarm over the planned architecture of NEHTA's PCEHR. The draft laws recently made public have only heightened those concerns with many experts claiming that the technology to guarantee security does not exist? Does it? And if so where would we find it completed, tested and working in the real world?

Answer:

The Department of Health and Ageing, in cooperation with the National E-Health Transition Authority (NEHTA), is ensuring that the security requirements for the personally controlled electronic health record (PCEHR) system are being developed in line with international and Australian standards and Australian Government requirements as outlined in the Protective Security Policy Framework, the Information Security Manual and Gatekeeper Framework and policy. Best practice processes through the frameworks and policies provided by Defence Signals Directorate, the Department of Finance and Deregulation and the Australian Government Information Office are also being addressed in developing the PCEHR system.

Access to the PCEHR system will mirror the business-to-government and business-to-business security practices in Medicare, as well as the Gatekeeper Public Key Infrastructure Framework, which has been guiding the development of the National Authentication Service for Health.