



The Hon. Greg Hunt MP
Minister for Health

MEDIA RELEASE

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My Health Record opt-out period extended

The Turnbull Government has today extended the opt-out period for My Health Record by an extra month to 15 November 2018, as was announced last week.

This was a key request from the Australian Medical Association and the Royal College of General Practitioners and gives Australians more time to consider their options as we strengthen the 2012 My Health Record legislation.

The Government will amend the 2012 legislation to ensure if someone wishes to cancel their record they will be able to do so permanently, with their record deleted from the system forever.

This means any Australian will be able to opt-out of the system permanently, at any time in the future, with their record deleted for good.

We will also strengthen the legislation to match the existing Australian Digital Health Agency policy.

This policy requires a court order to release any My Health Record information without consent.

The amendment will ensure no record can be released to police or government agencies, for any purpose, without a court order.

The Australian Digital Health Agency's policy is clear and categorical - no documents have been released in more than six years and no documents will be released without a court order. This will be enshrined in legislation.

As the Australian Digital Health Agency has already stated, contrary to incorrect claims made by unions this week, under the *Healthcare Identifiers Act 2010*, specifically subsection 14(2), healthcare providers cannot be authorised to collect, use or disclose a healthcare identifier, and as a consequence access a patient's My Health Record, for employment and insurance purposes.

Under the Act it is expressly prohibited and using or disclosing a healthcare identifier without authority is an offence and subject to severe penalties, including two years in jail and a fine of \$126,000.

Last week in Alice Springs all health ministers unanimously reaffirmed their support for My Health Record, the national opt-out approach and our steps to strengthen the legislation.

I welcome the bi-partisan support from both Labor and Liberal state governments for this important health reform.

As health ministers noted at the meeting, the expert clinical advice is that My Health Record will deliver better health care for patients.

The Government will also work with medical leaders on additional communications to the public about the benefits and purpose of the My Health Record, so they can make an informed choice.

(ENDS)

Authorised by Greg Hunt MP, Liberal Party of Australia, Somerville, Victoria.