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MEDIA RELEASE

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PCEHR Promotion Misleads the Public

The 'Personally-Controlled' Electronic Health Record (PCEHR) has been the subject of a media blitz by the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing.

"Information on television, the print and online media and radio is designed to pitch the benefits of PCEHR system registration without fully informed consent", said Dr Juanita Fernando, Health Informatics professional and Chair of the Health Committee of the Australian Privacy Foundation (APF).

"The APF has always strongly supported the appropriate application of information technology in the health care sector. However, the PCEHR has been designed to suit the needs of government, not patients", she said.

Patients demand a careful balance between their rights to privacy and the government's insatiable desire to collect, control and exploit personal data.

Patients have been naturally very sceptical about the PCEHR. To overcome this, the Department has mounted an expensive advertising campaign and published many 'fact sheets'.

But these are incomplete and seriously misleading. They fail to properly inform, and hence people are being inveigled into consenting to participation in the scheme.

"Neither clinicians nor the rest of the community understand the system, let alone the full implementation details", said Dr Juanita Fernando.

The Australian Privacy Foundation has prepared an antidote to the government's wilful misinformation.

The APF has published two FAQs:

- **for Health Care Consumers, at**
<http://www.privacy.org.au/Resources/AS-PCEHR-Cons.pdf>
- **for Health Care Clinicians**
<http://www.privacy.org.au/Resources/AS-PCEHR-Clin.pdf>

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