



**Australian  
Privacy  
Foundation**

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Ms Liz Forman  
Assistant Secretary  
eHealth Branch

Dear Liz Forman

**Re: Patient access to HI-related patient data**

Thanks for your timely response to the APF question about pseudonymous HIs on February 9, 2010. We have posted your full response on our web site at <http://www.privacy.org.au/>.

We are confused by another matter and hope you might clarify this too. When attending the Stakeholder conference in Canberra last November, an audience member asked about direct patient access to their HI and personal information stored about oneself. The audience was advised that no arrangement for direct access had been made and there were no plans to implement such. Yet government personnel present at a conference where I spoke yesterday asserted the policy had been updated to enable direct consumer access. At the same time, the HI Bill introduced to Parliament this week makes no reference to direct consumer access to the information. Thus I write to ask for clarification of the mechanisms that have evidently been established to enable direct consumer access to HIs and the linked personal information.

Would you update us as to what these mechanisms might be please? Would you also reassure us that patients will not be forced to confirm the personal details linked to the HI via a third party, such as a health professional, clinician or Medicare staff?

Yours sincerely

Chair, Health Sub Committee  
Australian Privacy Foundation

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Contact Details for the APF and its Board Members are at <http://www.privacy.org.au/About/Contacts.htm>