



**Australian
Privacy
Foundation**

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17 April 2011

Ms McCarter
Assistant Secretary, eHealth Systems Branch
Department of Health & Ageing

Dear Ms McCarter

Re: eHealth – Consumer Consultation and Project Governance

I refer to the APF's communications to you dated 14 February, 22 February and 25 February, and during your call to me on 22 February. I understand that you are also aware of our endeavours over a long period to achieve meaningful engagement with NEHTA, including communications dated 8 November, 15 November, 10 December, 25 January, 15 February and 25 February.

A letter from Mr Haikerwal dated 28 March was sent to us on 6 April.

He states that his letter, on NEHTA letterhead and signed by himself alone, is "a joint response from NEHTA and the Department of Health and Ageing".

From your one phone-call to me, I understood that DoHA has primary carriage of this matter, and that NEHTA is the coordinator of its technical aspects.

So it is impossible to interpret your failure to reply to the APF's communications to you as anything other than an avoidance manoeuvre. You would clearly prefer NEHTA to stay in the front line and 'take the damage'.

APF invested a great deal of effort over the last six months, in good faith, on the basis of representations by NEHTA that the views of consumer advocacy organisations mattered.

Your actions have made abundantly clear that the views of consumer advocacy organisations do not matter to you, and that your agency has every intention of continuing to play consumer advocacy organisations for fools, and proceeding with the project in the way that you and NEHTA determine, irrespective of consumer concerns.

The politeness that the APF has sustained during the last six months has not been warranted. The public now needs to be assisted to understand the real nature of the eHealth initiative.

Yours sincerely

Roger Clarke
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