



**Australian  
Privacy  
Foundation**

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17 April 2011

Dr Mukesh Haikerwal, National Clinical Lead, NEHTA

cc. Mr Peter Fleming, CEO, NEHTA

Dear Mukesh

**Re: PCEHR – Consumer Consultation and Project Governance**

I refer to your letter dated 28 March, but received only on 6 April.

Unfortunately, whoever wrote it for your signature completely ignored the content of the APF's letters. It is a wonderful example of 'staying on message', and not permitting submissions from outside the organisation to disturb the internally-set agenda.

Mr Fleming's letter of 18 November was the only other written reply that the APF received during the last six months. We accepted at face value his confirmation of "NEHTA's commitment to a methodical and cumulative approach to engagement with privacy advocacy organizations". We accordingly put considerable effort into the events you held, with Juanita Fernando and myself investing something like 15 person-days over 6 months.

Where we stand now is that NEHTA, DoHA and the Minister have jointly and severally demonstrated, by their actions, and by their refusal to respond to requests and submissions, that meaningful engagement with consumer advocacy organisations is simply not an acceptable notion to any of you.

For the last 5 years, and quite intensively during the last six months, the APF has worked hard to adopt as constructive a stance as it could to its interactions with agencies on eHealth matters. But you have not measured up to your personal commitments, NEHTA has not fulfilled the commitments of its CEO, and DoHA has completely failed its own obligations.

The only possible conclusions are that individual health consumer wellbeing is not a major objective of the scheme, and that DoHA and NEHTA intend pursuing a process, and producing a design, that fulfil their real aims, regardless of consumer interests, and regardless of the risks both to consumers and to multi-millions of dollars of taxpayers' funds.

It is therefore no longer possible for the APF to be restrained in its dealings with the media. The public needs to be aware of the real nature of the undertaking.

Yours sincerely

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