



1 June 2010

eHealth to reduce deaths and injuries due to clinical errors

The proposed personally controlled electronic health record for Australians by 2012 will reduce clinical errors and thereby save lives and needless suffering, says Australian General Practice Network (AGPN) Chair Dr Emil Djakic.

"With medical errors being identified as the leading cause of death and injury in Australia, we need to make sure that the right information is available in the right place at the right time and about the right patient," Dr Djakic said.

"A personally controlled electronic health record does this by putting the power in the patient's hands when it comes to controlling their own health information."

Dr Djakic, a national clinical adviser to the National E-Health Transition Authority (NEHTA) which is developing Australia's eHealth approach, says much work will need to be done to deliver this critical health record system.

"The personally controlled electronic health record will only be valuable if clinicians from across all public and private health systems can contribute information to it.

"We're working within very tight timeframes here and there's a lot of work to be done to ensure all clinicians are ready to engage with a personally controlled electronic health record when it arrives.

"We can't expect this to be an 'if you build it, they will come' system. We will need a considerable and coordinated 'change and adoption' program implemented across the entire primary care sector to make the electronic health record a reality," Dr Djakic said.

In response to this exciting and challenging reform environment, AGPN is hosting its National eHealth Conference 16 – 17 June 2010 at the Sebel Albert Park, Melbourne.

"The AGPN National eHealth Conference will bring together an excellent lineup of prominent national eHealth speakers and presentations on interesting and innovative eHealth projects from across the country.

"I invite you all to join me at this important event to discuss crucial issues like the role of eHealth in the reform agenda and the impacts of eHealth on health providers and health consumers," Dr Djakic said.

For more information on the AGPN National eHealth Conference visit the website:

<http://www.agpn.com.au/programs/ehealth-and-information-management/agpn-ehealth-conference-2010>