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MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release



Connecting healthcare in Australia

The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) has warmly welcomed the recent passing of the Healthcare Identifiers Bill through the Federal Parliament and is calling on all GPs to continue driving this process.

Dr Chris Mitchell, RACGP President, said that the passing of this legislation is the foundation needed to make e-health work in Australia and the passing of this legislation would not have been possible without the ongoing hard work and determination of general practice.

“The success of the Healthcare Identifiers Service in Australia will now be dependant on patients and health providers using the system to achieve the best possible health outcomes.

“We need all GPs and healthcare providers to drive this system forward and to ensure that the system is implemented correctly,” he said.

Dr Mitchell said that it is vital for all GPs and healthcare providers to get a clear idea of how the Healthcare Identifiers Service will work.

“The correct implementation of individual and healthcare provider identifiers is important because it will help to lead to a safer and more efficient means of connecting and communicating between healthcare providers such as general practitioners, hospitals, specialists and allied healthcare professionals. Better connections and communication will greatly reduce the risk of avoidable errors,” he said.

The RACGP’s e-health Futures exhibit at College House in Melbourne, which incorporates the National E-Health Transition Authority’s (NEHTA) Model Healthcare Community, displays how the new service will work. The interactive e-health display involves a walkthrough experience with simulations and demonstrations of how e-health information will work among healthcare professionals and between healthcare settings.

“The College is excited about the next step in the ongoing journey to improve healthcare for everyone in Australia by being a key player in developing e-health for the next generation of GPs and the community alike,” Dr Mitchell concluded.

e-health Futures is a unique opportunity for general practice teams, other health professionals, health industry associations, consumer groups, privacy advocates, universities, information industry associations, vendors and media representatives to learn more about e-health and the Healthcare Identifiers Service. Visitors can also see other innovations in e-health such as the PCS Clinical Audit Tool™ (CAT). Two other e-health tools, M5 HEALTH ONLINE and **PrimaryCare Sidebar™**, will be on display soon.

To book your e-health Futures tour and for more information, visit www.racgp.org.au/ehealthfutures.

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Notes to the editors

The Health Identifier Service will assign three types of healthcare identifiers:

- Individual Healthcare Identifier (IHI) – for individuals receiving healthcare services
- Healthcare Provider Identifier – Individual (HPI-I) – for healthcare professionals and other health personnel involved in providing patient care
- Healthcare Provider Identifier – Organisation (HPI-O) – for organisations (such as the hospital or health clinic) where healthcare is provided

Unique healthcare identifiers will now be allocated by the Healthcare Identifiers Service, operated by Medicare Australia.

For more information about the Healthcare Identifiers Service, visit www.ehealthinfo.gov.au and www.nehta.gov.au.

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About the RACGP

The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) sets and maintains the standards for quality clinical practice, education and training, and research in Australian general practice, and represents Australia's urban and rural general practitioners. Visit www.racgp.org.au.