

12 September 2018

**Submission to:
The Senate Community Affairs Reference Committee on the
My Health Record Amendment (Strengthening Privacy) Bill 2018**

Letter of support – Northern Territory AIDS and Hepatitis Council

To whom it may concern

As the Executive Director of the Northern Territory AIDS and Hepatitis Council (NTAHC) and on behalf of NTAHC, I am writing to endorse Hepatitis Australia's submission to the *Senate Community Affairs Reference Committee on the My Health Records Amendment (Strengthening Privacy) Bill 2018*.

NTAHC is a not for profit community based organisation that delivers programs across blood borne virus prevention, community education and workforce development, support and referral. We are committed to improving the health and wellbeing of all Territorians living with, or at risk of, BBVs.

NTAHC works with some of the most marginalised groups in our community such as:

- People living with HIV/AIDS
- People living with viral hepatitis
- People who use drugs
- Gay men and other men who have sex with men
- Sex workers
- Aboriginal people
- People from culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

It is broadly accepted and acknowledged, including in National Strategies developed and approved by all jurisdictions, that many people from these communities are subjected to stigma and discrimination, including in the health care setting. Stigma and discrimination creates barriers to accessing quality health care for these communities.

NTAHC acknowledges the intended benefits of the My Health Record however, there are elements inherent in the current MHR system (namely those outlined in the Hepatitis Australia submission: privacy, data protection and stigma) which may increase the risk of confidentiality breaches and people from marginalised communities experiencing stigma and discrimination. These areas should be reviewed and revised to remedy these problems before we can have full confidence in promoting it to people who engage with NTAHC.

NTAHC was consulted in the development of Hepatitis Australia's submission and fully supports and endorses it.

Yours faithfully

Kerrie Jordan
Executive Director