



Australia's national maternity consumer advocacy organisation

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9 January 2012

The Hon. Tanya Plibersek, MP  
Minister for Health  
PO Box 6022  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600  
Australia

Dear Minister,

**Personally controlled electronic health record**

Maternity Coalition (MC) supports the position of the Australian College of Midwives (ACM) that midwives should be included in the definition of "nominated healthcare provider" in the *Personally Controlled Electronic Health Records Bill 2011*. This would enable midwives to initiate a shared health summary.

The Commonwealth's maternity reforms aim to give women greater access to primary midwifery care through eligible midwives. Women can engage the care of an eligible midwife without a referral from a doctor. The start of maternity care is an important re-engagement with health care for many women and families.

Eligible midwives have obligations around collaboration that would be facilitated by shared electronic health records. They are also able to request certain pathology and diagnostic imaging services which require information to be shared between healthcare providers.

Allowing midwives to initiate shared health summaries will ensure that women receive integrated care and that they are able to have a personally controlled electronic health record generated at the earliest opportunity.

MC requests that the legislation is amended to include midwives as nominated healthcare providers to initiate a shared health summary.

Yours faithfully,

Ann Catchlove  
National President  
Maternity Coalition

[www.maternitycoalition.org.au](http://www.maternitycoalition.org.au)

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