

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**

**ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**HEALTH PORTFOLIO**

**Supplementary Budget Estimates 2016 - 2017, 19 October 2016**

**Ref No:** SQ16-000591

**OUTCOME:** 1 - Health System Policy, Design and Innovation

**Topic:** Ehealth

**Type of Question:** Written Question on Notice

**Senator:** Di Natale, Richard

**Question:**

How many Australians now have an e health record after the commencement of the 'opt-out' trial March this year?

- a) What is the duration of the trial expected to be?
- b) What is the objective of the trial?
- c) How is it being monitored?
- d) How many Australians have 'opted out'?

**Answer:**

Nationally, since the re-launch of the My Health Record and the opt-out trials on 4 March 2016, the number of individuals with a My Health Record has increased by 1.68 million - from 2.64 million to just over 4.32 million (as at 4 November 2016). This increase includes around 709,000 new registrations through the current opt-in arrangements, and 971,000 My Health Records automatically created as part of the Northern Queensland and the Nepean Blue Mountains opt-out trials.

- a) The trials formally concluded at the end of October 2016.
- b) The trials in Northern Queensland and Nepean Blue Mountains are being conducted to understand consumer reaction to an opt-out system of participation in My Health Record, as well as healthcare provider use and contribution of clinical information to the My Health Record, when most of their patients have a My Health Record.
- c) An independent evaluator, Siggins Miller, has been engaged by the Department to assess the outcome of all trials against the current 'opt-in' system of participation that is operating in the rest of Australia.

The evaluator's report is due to be provided to the Department at the end of November 2016. The evaluation will inform a future government decision, expected in the first half of 2017, for bringing forward the benefits of the My Health Record nationally, including whether to adopt an opt-out system nationally.

- d) In the two 'opt-out' trials areas of Northern Queensland and Nepean Blue Mountains, 1.9 per cent of individuals across both regions, or 22,420 people, advised of their decision not to have a My Health Record created for them.

This 'opt-out' rate is in line with international experience with opt-out systems for electronic health records.