

NEHTA's response to a comment raised by the witness from the Australian Privacy Foundation regarding standards.

Can you respond to the following statement by Dr Juanita Fernando from the Australian Privacy Foundation to the Committee on 10 March 2010:

“There are basically two core standards that I am discussing in Australia. They are both under the auspices of HL7. One is a HL7 2; the other is HL7 3. At the moment most of the hospitals and health organisations in Australia use HL7 2 technical standards to intercommunicate. The HIA, though, will be based on HL7 version 3, which is completely different. So it is going to require some kind of short- to medium-term reinvestment in terms of technology for those kinds of information exchanges to take place. At the present they cannot take place.”

Healthcare providers using either version 2 or version 3 of HL7 will be able to interoperate with the HI Service identifiers.

The interface between the HI Service and healthcare organisations will use standard XML-based web services as described in the specification documents published on NEHTA's website. The identifiers provided by the HI Service can be carried within HL7 version 2 or version 3 messages, as well as HL7 CDA documents.

NEHTA does not require healthcare providers to migrate from HL7 version 2 to version 3 in order for them to interoperate with the HI Service. A decision by a healthcare organisation to move to version 3 is a matter for them to determine in line with their business requirements outside the use of the HI Service.