

## Ministerial Review of Victorian Health Sector Information and Communication Technology

**31 October 2013**

This week the Victorian Minister for Health released the Ministerial Review of Victorian Health Sector Information and Communication Technology. VHA Chief Executive Trevor Carr was on the panel which undertook the review.

The review panel examined a number of critical issues confronting ICT development in the Victorian health sector including functionality and costs, governance, interoperability and national eHealth initiatives. Importantly, the review also made findings and recommendations regarding acquisition, procurement and investment in health ICT.

The review established that although the HealthSMART program accrued some benefits to large metropolitan health providers, it has not consistently met the needs of community health services or smaller, rural or specialist health providers.

The VHA welcomes the findings of the review panel and notes the high degree of consistency the findings have with feedback received from members in relation to the VHA's 2014-15 state budget submission. It is also encouraging that the government's response to the panel's recommendations has been a positive one.

In response to identified issues with ICT development in the Victorian health sector, the review offers a number of recommendations, including:

- Health ICT decisions should be subject to normal business governance mechanisms within a health service that entail delegated accountabilities to health service boards, but which are guided by specified statewide health priorities;
- The role of the Victorian Department of Health is to stipulate priorities and objectives not mandate specific systems or products; and,
- A statewide ICT plan should be developed, which links with the Victorian Health Priorities Framework as well as national eHealth initiatives.

The VHA is particularly supportive of the development of a statewide health ICT plan by the government as a matter of priority, which has been supported by the government.

The full review can be accessed via the following link:

<http://docs.health.vic.gov.au/docs/doc/Ministerial-Review-of-Victorian-Health-Sector-Information-and-Communication-Technology>

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