



## MEDIA RELEASE

...good health and wellbeing in rural and remote Australia.

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### **Legislative Changes Improve My Health Record**

The National Rural Health Alliance – Australia’s peak rural health body representing more than 7 million Australians – has welcomed the legislative changes to My Health Record which have passed through Parliament.

Alliance CEO, Mark Diamond, said the changes protected the right of individuals, including teenagers and vulnerable groups, and improved the My Health Record program.

The new measures allow Australians to opt in or out of having a My Health Record at any time and provided increased security protections for people using the electronic record system.

Mr Diamond said the Alliance supported My Health Record, which was particularly important for people living in regional, rural and remote areas and often suffered from the tyranny of distance and isolation in accessing health services.

“The very real fact is Australians living in rural and remote areas do not have the same access to health services that is available to those living in metropolitan areas, and My Health Record assists them by incorporating their health information and allowing doctors, pharmacists and practitioners to access this information at the point of care, regardless of where that may be,” Mr Diamond said.

“This is a great opportunity now for people in rural areas to try My Health Record, see what information they have access to and know that they will always have the option to opt out.

“In a country as big as Australia, with so many isolated and remote communities, digital health is the way of the future. Paper-based records create substantial problems for people living in rural areas – the ability to always have access to your current health information on-line through the My Health Record system means that you are never without this information, regardless of where you may be.”

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*The National Rural Health Alliance is Australia’s peak non-government organisation for rural and remote health.*