A Vision for an Australian Healthcare System Transformed by Health Informatics

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In the issue of the Medical Journal of Australia1 published just prior to the November 2007 election, a number of commentators including the Federal Minister and Shadow Minister reflected on the Australian health system and their plans for its future. The members of the Health Informatics Society of Australia (HISA) believe there is a yawning gap in this analysis; both in terms of the size of the problem and how it might be fixed.

HISA strongly holds the view that Australia lacks a vision for the health system and in particular how it could be transformed by health informatics. HISA believes it is both essential and urgent that there be an agreed vision and an appropriately resourced plan.

In October 2007 the US based eHealth Initiative published their 'Blueprint: Building Consensus for Common Action'. The 'Blueprint' appeared to accurately and succinctly articulate a desirable vision of a healthcare system transformed by health informatics, which was also appropriate to Australia. HISA undertook a survey of its members and supporters to test whether this was so and to expand on the vision for the Australian context.

This paper presents a vision that is strongly supported for application in Australia by those who have an understanding of health informatics.