

11 July 2018

Did you know you may already have a My Health Record?

For the rest of Australia, 16 July marks the launch of the three month opt-out period for the Federal Government's My Health Record expansion program. In the Nepean Blue Mountains region, most people already have a My Health Record that was created as part of the 2016 Opt-Out Trial.

My Health Record is an individual's own online summary of key health information, that is controlled by them, and that is easily accessible by doctors, pharmacists, specialists and hospitals. Over 5.8 Million Australians already have one, including up to 98% of Nepean Blue Mountains residents, with less than 2% choosing to opt-out when the Nepean Blue Mountains was one of only two regions in Australia included in the My Health Record Opt-Out Trial.

Wentworth Healthcare, provider of the Nepean Blue Mountains Primary Health Network (NBMPHN), helped lead the Trial and has continued to work closely with primary healthcare providers in the region to increase knowledge and usage of the tool over the past two years.

CEO of Wentworth Healthcare, Lizz Reay said, "I am proud that we lead Australia in digital health adoption through the My Health Record Opt-Out Trial, and that due to its success, by the end of the year every Australian will have a My Health Record, unless they choose not to."

"Digital technology is transforming healthcare. It has the power to improve access to services, increase collaboration and facilitate the delivery of safe, high quality and effective healthcare, which ultimately saves lives," she said.

Having a My Health Record means important health information like allergies, medical conditions, treatments, medicine details, and test reports can all be digitally available in one place. This can help individuals keep track of their own health history and reduce the need to repeat their health story every time they see a healthcare provider, especially when managing complex or chronic conditions. In emergency situations, hospitals can view this information to help them make the most appropriate treatment choices quickly.

"In our region 75% of our general practices are registered to use My Health Record and 70% are regular users, which shows that people in our region are seeing the benefit of using the system. Yet, some people may not realise that they already have a My Health Record," said Ms Reay.

"The Government's national expansion program is a great opportunity to remind our residents of the benefits of using this tool, and to encourage them to explore some of the new features. For example, a recent addition is the connection to pathology and diagnostic services where blood, X-ray, CT and other test reports can now be uploaded by participating organisations. This functionality is particularly useful when monitoring changes in chronic conditions and can reduce the need for tests to be duplicated by multiple practitioners," she said.

"We want to encourage those who haven't yet used their My Health Record to access it through their MyGov account and to start asking their doctors to upload information, so that they can start to see the benefits of having control of their own health information," said Ms Reay.

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Wentworth Healthcare Limited (ABN 88 155 904 975) provider of the Nepean Blue Mountains PHN.

Those living in the Nepean Blue Mountains region who already have a My Health Record, have the option to cancel at any time. You can find the 'Cancel My Health Record' button under the 'Profile' menu within your record, or you can call the My Health Record Helpline on 1800 723 471.

Those who are new to the region since July 2016, will join the rest of Australia in making a decision as to whether having a My Health Record is the right choice for them during the national opt-out period from 16 July - 15 October 2018. During this time, people who do not want a record will be able to opt-out by visiting the My Health Record website or by calling the My Health Record Helpline on 1800 723 471.

Free Community Information Sessions:

Free *Your Health in Your Hands: My Health Record* community information sessions are being run through Nepean Community College. At these sessions people can learn how to access their record, add information and control who has access to it. The following sessions will take place at Westfield, Penrith:

- **Wednesday 18 July**, 10:00 am to 12:00 pm
- **Friday 24 August**, 12:00 pm to 2:00 pm
- **Thursday 6 September**, 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm
- **Monday 8 October**, 10:00 am to 12:00 pm

To register for these free sessions, contact Nepean Community College on 4724 9000 or online at www.ncc.nsw.edu.au.

More information about My Health Record can be found at www.myhealthrecord.gov.au.

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The Nepean Blue Mountains PHN is a program run by
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Hawkesbury, Lithgow and Penrith.

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