

7 October 2019

Data Legislation  
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To whom it may concern

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the draft Health Legislation Amendment (Data-matching) Bill (the Bill) 2019.

With over 26 000 members, the Australian Physiotherapy Association (APA) is the peak body representing the interests of Australian physiotherapists and their patients. We are committed to professional excellence and career success, which translates into better patient outcomes and improved health conditions for all Australians. The APA believes that all Australians deserve equal access to safe, high quality, evidence based care.

Overall, the APA supports the amendments to the Bill including amending the *National Health Act 1953* and the *Health Insurance Act 1973*. The APA recognises that the importance of protecting the integrity of the Medicare health payments system through prevention, identification and treatment of fraudulent and incorrect claiming. Thus, the APA supports the proposed legislative changes which will assist to more efficiently and accurately detect fraud, incorrect or inappropriate claiming to ensure a greater percentage of incorrectly paid benefits are identified or removed.

In drafting this bill, the APA proposes that the Department of Health (the Department) also considers the following matters.

**1. The data matching identification process between Department of Veteran Affairs (DVA) /private health insurers and Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS).**

Especially in cases of patients with co-morbidities, the APA anticipates that there will be instances where it may be appropriate to claim for both MBS and DVA items. To ensure that the patient receives the best outcome, access to these items can be imperative. As funding through MBS and DVA items enables this, the APA would like to emphasize the importance of the process to identifying incorrect claims should be thorough and detailed. The process should also allow for an opportunity for providers to respond to the claim within a practical timeframe. This will minimise any cost-recovery claims with a valid reasoning.

**2. The communication when private health insurers voluntarily provide information to the Department.**

With Private Health Insurers voluntarily providing information to the Department, the breadth of the data being collated will be significant. To reduce the risk of this, the APA recommends that the Department considers enforcing communication from private health insurer with the relevant provider when the private health insurer is providing their data.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide input on the draft Health Legislation Amendment (Data-matching) Bill 2019. If you have queries about this feedback, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Kind regards



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