

10 December 2014

Information Sharing  
Children's Action Plan  
PO Box 1556  
Wellington 6140

By email: [infosharing@childrensactionplan.govt.nz](mailto:infosharing@childrensactionplan.govt.nz)

## **Consultation on Children's Action Plan Approved Information Sharing Agreement**

Dear Sir/Madam

The New Zealand Medical Association (NZMA) welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on the draft Agreement for Approved Information Sharing (the Agreement) for the work of the Children's Action Plan, developed under Part 9A of the Privacy Act 1993.

The NZMA is the country's largest voluntary pan-professional medical organisation with approximately 5,000 members. Our members come from all disciplines within the medical profession and include general practitioners, doctors-in-training, specialists, and medical students. The NZMA aims to provide leadership of the medical profession, and promote professional unity and values, and the health of New Zealanders.

We note that the Agreement is intended to provide certainty about privacy and information sharing for the operation of the Children's Action Plan, Children's Teams, the supporting infrastructure for the Hub (the entry point for the public into Children's Teams), and the Vulnerable Kids Information System. We also note that the Agreement provides that information will be shared with the informed consent of the person who the information is about, unless sharing without informed consent is not practical and is justified in the public interest in identifying vulnerable children and protecting children who are at risk.

Our association has previously expressed support for better information sharing to help identify and provide care for vulnerable children.<sup>1</sup> Our association has also previously submitted in favour of the Privacy (Information Sharing) Bill.<sup>2</sup>

We are supportive of the proposed draft Agreement for Approved Information Sharing to support the work of the Children's Action Plan. We believe that it will contribute towards improved inter-agency coordination as well as facilitate a more proactive approach to identifying and providing care for vulnerable children. Our main concern relates to the possible negative implications of broader information sharing, namely, the possible erosion of trust between at-risk children and/or their parents/caregivers and those individuals/agencies tasked with helping them. Developing ways to mitigate this possible erosion of trust requires careful consideration.

We hope that our comments on this draft Agreement have been helpful and look forward to learning of the recommendations to the Minister of Social Development that are to be developed following consideration of submissions on this draft Agreement.

Yours sincerely



Dr Mark Peterson  
NZMA Chair

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<sup>1</sup> NZMA Press release. White Paper's focus on better information sharing for vulnerable children commended. 11 October 2012. Available from [www.nzma.org.nz/news-and-events/media-releases/white-papers-focus-on-better-information-sharing-for-vulnerable-children-commended](http://www.nzma.org.nz/news-and-events/media-releases/white-papers-focus-on-better-information-sharing-for-vulnerable-children-commended)

<sup>2</sup> NZMA submission on the Privacy (Information Sharing) Bill. 23 March 2012. Available from [www.nzma.org.nz/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0011/1613/sub-privacybill.pdf](http://www.nzma.org.nz/_data/assets/pdf_file/0011/1613/sub-privacybill.pdf)