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Transcript: AMA President, Dr Tony Bartone, ABC Radio, *AM Program*, with Kim Landers, Wednesday 1 August 2018

Subject: My Health Record

KIM LANDERS: Well, the President of the Australian Medical Association, Dr Tony Bartone, with that last night's meeting with the Minister. He's a Melbourne based GP and he joins me on the line. Dr Bartone, good morning.

TONY BARTONE: Good morning.

KIM LANDERS: Has the Minister put to bed once and for all any ambiguity about the privacy of the My Health system?

TONY BARTONE: I believe that after the assurances we received last night and the commitment to strengthen the legislation we can now move forward and have certainty around the protections to the privacy of those medical records that our patients expect when they confide their information with us.

KIM LANDERS: Are people going to be specifically listed as to who needs a court warrant? For example, the Minister just mentioned police and other government agencies. Is that your understanding that there'll be specific reference made to who needs to get a court warrant to access records?

TONY BARTONE: As I understand it, the reference to the need for a court warrant will apply to anyone, judicial oversight, the court order will be absolutely sacrosanct, the minimum requirement access to records for anyone, including any government agency or other authority.

KIM LANDERS: And, are you pleased by the Minister's agreement to allow somebody if they choose to opt-out at a later stage that all their records would then be deleted and not kept in some sort of system?

TONY BARTONE: This was a concern raised by a number of reporters. Obviously, it was of significant concern for some. The assurance that these records will be deleted permanently will hopefully appease also those concerns in that area. We do take the importance of clinical information and the recording of that and the storing of that very, very seriously. But in this instance, it's another one of the steps to assure the confidence in the system around the privacy which is paramount to the successful implementation of the My Health Record.

KIM LANDERS: The Minister says he's considering whether to extend that opt-out period for another month, He's going to run it by his State and Territory colleagues when he attends the COAG meeting in Alice Springs. Do you think an extra month for the opt-out period, an extra month for people to make up their minds is a good thing?

TONY BARTONE: So, I was very clear with the Minister on this point. I said there needed to be clear air, and all the assurances and the ambiguity removed, and then have the ability to start that three-month process. I've been assured that the legislative changes will be made very, very quickly to ensure that we can then start that- the information and the presentation of information to the public which is another key part of last night's meeting, that there'll be

information provided to the Australian community as a whole, significant information, robust information, to allow them to make an informed decision about the opt-out. And then we'll have- we've requested an extension of that opt-out period by a month to allow a full and frank consideration of the information, and then also the utility to the patient and...

KIM LANDERS: How much damage has been done to the reputation of this system. And have you specifically asked the Government to do a big PR campaign, have you, to repair it?

TONY BARTONE: Well, what I've actually said - and I've been on the record about this, that if they had their time over again they would have had a different communication and information strategy. We were clear right from the beginning of the year what should have been the issue. We've highlighted the fact that the lack of information provided to the Australian public during this period, we've asked for that significant build up and robust input to be provided, and to allow a full and frank consideration regarding the decision to opt-out and the clinical utility of the product as well.

KIM LANDERS: In the meantime, have doctors' surgeries been advised to update computer systems and firewalls, are you getting any help with that?

TONY BARTONE: The privacy protection of our records and the security protection of our records is of considerable and paramount importance to us. We have protocols and procedures in place. We work with our providers in that space to ensure that everything is in compliance and in the utmost preparedness for any attack that we can envisage.

KIM LANDERS: Alright, Dr Tony Bartone, thank you very much for speaking with *AM*.

TONY BARTONE: Not a problem. Good morning.

KIM LANDERS: And that is the President of the Australian Medical Association, Dr Tony Bartone.

1 August 2018

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