



## **Productivity Commission highlights the benefits of ICT**

Recent findings by the Productivity Commission confirm the benefits of information and communications technology (ICT) in improving patient safety, Professor Andrew Coats, Chair of the Australian Health Information Council (AHIC), said today.

Commenting on the Productivity Commission report *Impacts of Advances in Medical Technology in Australia* released on 20 September, Professor Coates said that while the Australian health care system is one of the best in the world, there remains a major challenge to integrate information from multiple systems in a streamlined and effective way.

The Commission found that ICT developments have significant capacity to improve health outcomes and provide more efficient and safer delivery of health services through greater connectivity. Realising this potential will require better upfront assessment, planning, co-ordination and more investment.

“By meeting the challenge of health system interoperability, Australia will reap the benefits of more efficient, effective healthcare delivery and limit the unintended harm of adverse events,” Professor Coates said.

“Across Australia, substantial work is underway to achieve these benefits, including the formation of the National E-Health Transition Authority (NEHTA) to drive forward critical work to support connectivity.

“Work is also underway on *HealthConnect* to establish a national health information network and on other key projects to support improved interoperability and infrastructure.

“A national collaborative approach is the key to our ongoing success, so AHIC will continue providing advice to health ministers about national priorities and key reform issues for health ICT,” Professor Coates said.

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