

**The University of Melbourne Health Informatics Network**  
**Health Information: Building the Research Agenda – An Industry Workshop**  
**Session 1- 9:30-11**  
**Enabling research: data, standards and integration in health**

**Speakers:**

- ∞ *Marianne Hibbert*: MMIM Senior Project Manager (Bio21)
- ∞ *Hugh Leslie*: Clinical Director, Ocean Informatics
- ∞ *Michael Georgeff*: Director, Monash University e-Health Research Unit and CEO Precedence Healthcare
- ∞ *Michael Frommer*: Director, Sydney Health Projects Group, University of Sydney and NCRIS Facilitator

MH: presented an overview of the MMIM project, including the scope of coverage - the hospitals currently involved, the types of data being stored, and the aggregation, record linkage, metadata repository and reporting processes)

HL: “Making Health Compute” – talked about semantic interoperability and the role of standards. The core problems: patients attending multiple sites for clinical care; data highly distributed and heterogeneous; medical information is complex and lacks standard representations. Introduction to OpenEHR - an open source set of standards for health data management.

MG: “E-Health and the Transformation of Health Care” – argued that fundamental changes are needed in the way that governments and administrators think about health IT, before progress can be made. Discussion focus: chronic disease. The health system is siloed and not well suited to managing the information around people with chronic disease who need to be on monitored care plans. Most of the focus of health IT investment has been on managing the physical assets, whereas the perspective of a knowledge-based industry, with distributed knowledge sources, is far more appropriate, if the target is to improve patient outcomes. Brief introduction to CDM-Net – a pilot government and industry funded project about to start in the Barwon region, Victoria, for Chronic Disease Management.

MF: presented an introduction to NCRIS and the main findings in relation to an ‘investment plan’ for health data linkage. As a motivating example, Michael considered the question “What are the outcomes for people on prescription medicines?” and how improved availability of outcomes data could assist in answering such questions; importantly, (for example) linking existing data from the PBS databases with hospital admission data would assist, at relatively modest cost, similarly linking the extensive cancer registry with death outcomes. NCRIS is a Commonwealth Government initiative funded to 2011, managed by DEST, and for each of selected capability areas, an investment plan is being prepared. A draft report on the Health Data Linkage capability will be provided to DEST shortly, with a final plan by November. Up to \$20 million has been earmarked for the Health Data Linkage capability. Important to note that the legal, ethical, political and attitudinal barriers are more significant than the technical barriers. The investment plan will make recommendations about organisational structures, standards and human capability development.

*Notes by Liz Sonenberg*