

# Editor's Introduction to this Journal: Advancing Health Informatics and the Use of Information, Knowledge and Communication Technologies in Health Care

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The Health Informatics discipline is gaining greater interest primarily due to a number of very significant national initiatives that are instrumental in actively promoting the use of information, knowledge and communication technologies in the health industry for the purpose of ensuring patient safety, improving population health, greater health care delivery efficiencies and above all improved outcomes. We are all grappling with how best to design and implement electronic health records as well as achieve semantic interoperability between systems to meet these primary objectives of healthy people and sustainable health systems. During this process we are constantly encountering new challenges as the delivery of health services consists of many diverse aspects and enormous complexity. The health industry as a whole has links with numerous entities and processes.

We need to learn from each other's experiences and ideas regarding how best to meet these numerous and diverse challenges in a timely manner. The waiting time between paper acceptance and print publication for the most sought after refereed journals is

extending. Members of the Health Informatics Society of Australia (HISA) have requested the re-establishment of their journal. The HISA Board together with the Fellows and Members of the Australian College of Health Informatics (ACHI) were of the view that a freely available electronic journal has the potential for maximum impact, a feature now seen as highly desirable by the Australian Government's Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) within their new Research Quality Framework (RQF).

This open-access electronic Journal provides a new forum for academic exchange in the field of Health Informatics. It is established primarily for the benefit of the Asia-Pacific region but is also expected to be of interest by extended international audiences.

The Journal is committed to scholarly excellence and is dedicated to the advancement of the Health Informatics discipline and to the use of information, knowledge and communication technologies by all working within the health industry. It has been officially endorsed by HISA and ACHI, further

endorsement by other regional national professional organizations is expected to follow in the near future.

This journal's editorial board consists of an impressive selection of health professionals with expertise representing the entire Health Informatics discipline as well as the Asia-Pacific region. A number of the editorial board members have considerable editorial experience with other journals. This editorial board subscribes to the exemplary scientific conduct principles pertaining to the submission of manuscripts as recently documented by Miller, Groth, Hasman, Haux, McCray (2006) and among others published in the Journal of the American Medical Informatics Association (Vol.13 No.1 pp 113-114). eJHI has been established as a fully refereed scholarly journal by adopting an internationally recognised peer review process in accordance with the Australian Government's DEST peer review guidelines. Only original papers, research results, reviews, reports, opinion papers and editorials on topics within the Health Informatics discipline will be published.

Our first issue consists of a selection of papers on Health Data Mining. As a rule we will focus each issue on a special topic compiled by a guest editor to provide a fairly comprehensive overview of each topic. Other planned issues to follow will cover Aged Care Informatics, Semantic Interoperability, Bridging the Digital Divide: Consumers, Clinicians and Computers, e-Health, Using Web Technologies. Some of these will be based on a selection of best papers from national conferences complimented by invited and submitted papers. All manuscript submissions must be compliant with our published author guidelines and the exemplary scientific conduct principles. We welcome your suggestions for topics we should cover in our series of special topics.

## Acknowledgements

I together with the HISA Board and ACHI Executive wish to express our gratitude to Central Queensland University and especially to Dr Sebastian Garde, eJHI's Managing Editor, for hosting and establishing this eJournal free of charge.

## References

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