

## About TAS eHealth Messaging

### What is TAS eHealth?

TAS eHealth is aimed at improving communications between health care providers across the State. There are two initial services being provided through TAS eHealth – the TAS eHealth Messaging (TeHM) – a secure electronic messaging service and TAS and eHealth Directory (TeHD), which lists contact details for health care providers across Tasmania.



The TAS eHealth program has been developed to deliver the necessary infrastructure to support this objective and to underpin the state and national eHealth agendas.

### What is TAS eHealth Messaging?

The General Practice Tasmania Network has developed a secure electronic clinical messaging environment known as TAS eHealth Messaging (TeHM). The primary purpose of TAS eHealth Messaging is to provide a simple, fast and secure web-based messaging system which allows the exchange of clinical and patient information between healthcare providers electronically.



### What is the TAS eHealth Directory?

The TAS eHealth Directory (the Directory) provides a secure and accurate source of information about where health care providers work and how they can most effectively be contacted.



The Directory currently includes all GPs in Tasmania and is now being expanded to include contact details for other health provider groups such as specialists, allied health professionals and aged care facilities. This will ultimately make the Directory a central and authoritative source of health providers' contact details to enable secure communication of patient information across Tasmania.

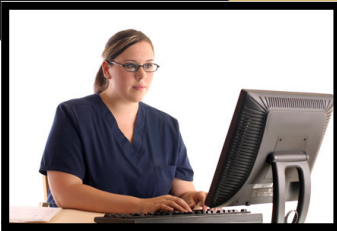
An eHealth initiative of General Practice Tasmania

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## About secure messaging



### What is secure messaging?

Businesses use email as a standard part of their day to maintain contact with clients and colleagues. However sending patient details using traditional email is unsecure and as such may compromise patient privacy.

Doctors can use a secure messaging service to send patient data safely and securely over the Internet. A secure messaging service will encrypt your message and any attachments automatically, and send it through to the intended recipient securely and cost effectively. Only the intended recipient will be able to open and read the document.

### What are the legal issues with electronic messaging?

When sending patient data over the Internet it is a requirement that the data be encrypted so that only the recipient can read the document. The need to address security and privacy concerns was at the top of the list in the design of the ReferralNet software.

Products such as ReferralNet's electronic referrals are compliant with the Electronic Transactions Act (1999) and transmit data using Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) technology and every individual report can only be viewed by those who have specifically been granted access.

Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) is a set of procedures and technology that provides security and confidentiality for electronic business.

### How can I find out more about PKI?

For assistance with obtaining PKI certificates to comply with Medicare Australia requirements, contact TAS eHealth toll free on 1800 EHEALTH or go to the Medicare website at [www.medicareaustralia.gov.au](http://www.medicareaustralia.gov.au) to learn more.

### Who is NEHTA?

NEHTA is a not-for-profit company established by the Australian, State and Territory governments to develop better ways of electronically collecting and securely exchanging information.

NEHTA is collaborating with the medical software vendors to develop specifications and standards for secure messaging for healthcare providers. This work is associated with the Australian government's [Practice Incentives Program](#).

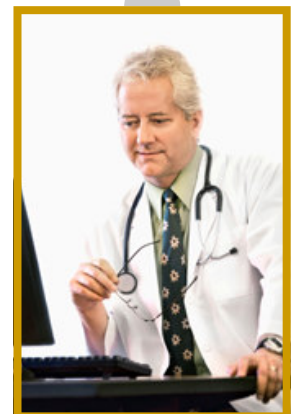
For more information, visit [www.nehta.gov.au](http://www.nehta.gov.au).

### How can I find out more about the Medicare Australia eHealth Practice Incentive Payment (PIP) Program?

The e-Health PIP Program is an Australian government initiative to encourage the uptake of e-health technologies in all general practices, and has components that practices need to meet in order to qualify for payments through this incentive.

One of the requirements to qualify for this incentive is for a practice to have secure messaging capability using a software/vendor that is on NEHTA's Eligible Supplier list.

More information about the eHealth PIP program is available at [www.tasehealth.com.au](http://www.tasehealth.com.au). Alternatively, you may contact TAS eHealth toll free on 1800 EHEALTH or contact NEHTA's at 1300 901 001 or email enquiries to [pip@nehta.gov.au](mailto:pip@nehta.gov.au) or visit [www.nethta.gov.au/pip](http://www.nethta.gov.au/pip).



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## How will I benefit from secure messaging?

### Benefits to sender

Using secure messaging to send referrals, letters, and reports eliminates or reduces the following:

- Cost of paper for printing
- Cost of envelopes
- Postage cost per letter
- Cost of sending a fax
- Cost of admin time spent printing, folding and placing letters in envelopes, labeling envelopes, transporting to post box, walking to and from fax machine, faxing the letter and filing the letter

### Benefits to receiver

Using secure messaging to receive messages eliminates or reduces the following:

- Cost of paper used for receiving faxes
- Cost of admin time sorting mail and opening letters
- Cost of admin time spent scanning or copying faxed document, forwarding the document to the healthcare provider, filing the document, and managing the digital document.

### Financial Savings

Using secure messaging is a cost effective means of communication for healthcare providers. A Practice could be spending **\$855 for every 100 reports** sent and received via Post or Fax, an expense that could be eliminated if reports were sent electronically<sup>1</sup>.



<sup>1</sup> Based on "General Practice Cost/Benefit Analysis for Using Secure Messaging" and "Cost benefit analysis of secure messaging Communication Costs for Allied Health working in Aged Care" by the SEA-GP (Brisbane), November 2008 <http://www.seagp.org.au>