

To:

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Sent by HINZ Chairwoman – Liz Schoff

Dear Sirs

SUBJECT: Safeguards for Health Domains

On behalf of Health Informatics New Zealand (HINZ) I am writing to call your attention to the critical need to ensure appropriate safeguards for the health-related Internet domain names.

HINZ is a national, not-for-profit organisation with a focus on collaboration, education and advocacy for the use of Information Technology in the health sector based in New Zealand and is a member organisation of IMIA (International Medical Informatics Association.) Its mission is to foster throughout New Zealand the development of knowledge and the utilisation of Informatics within all areas of clinical practice, education, and the provision of healthcare generally. Membership is open to anyone with an interest in health informatics.

Health information, data, products and services have an important and unique status on the Internet. There is significant, quantified evidence of the growing use of the Internet as a means for health professionals and everyday citizens to manage their health needs. This results in both an increased risk and an increased value from the Internet for individual lives. It is imperative that operators of health domains manage them for and in the public interest. In the context of allocation of the new Internet domain names, the governmental advisory group to the ICANN has proposed a set of generic safeguards for health-related names and stressed that they “may require further targeted safeguards”. The safeguards are inadequate for health and require significant revision. Strengthening them will not only address the concerns of the

community, but will also enable providers and businesses to flourish in a safe and assured environment.

You have seen the many concerns expressed by the health community on .health alone, one of the most contested names, in the form of GAC advice, public comments, community objections, and objections submitted by ICANN's independent objector. The concerns raised so far by organisations and individuals knowledgeable and established in the health community have not been sufficiently addressed, yet the applications are proceeding.

We therefore call on the ICANN Board to delay the allocation of .health and other health-related names until adequate safeguards, and baseline conditions for their implementation, are in place. Towards that end, it is essential that ICANN looks to the health community to lead the process to produce a new set of safeguards for health, to be discussed with the ICANN Board at the London ICANN meeting in June, 2014.

Regards

Liz Schoff, HINZ Chairwoman

www.hinz.org.nz