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# New ePIP rules ripe for 'gaming': RACGP



[David Rowley \(/author/david-rowley\)](#) 15 January 2016



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GOVERNMENT plans to tie e-health practice incentive payments of \$50,000 a quarter to GPs uploading a specified number of shared health summaries leaves "the door wide open" for "gaming the system", the RACGP says.

Under changes flagged in a Christmas Eve email from the Department of Health, practices will need to upload a shared health summary for 0.5% of their "standardised whole patient equivalent" per quarter to maintain ePIP eligibility.

The RACGP says the policy misses its target because it aims incentives at practices rather than practitioners.

"Practices cannot directly influence the actions of practitioners," says chair of the college's expert committee on eHealth and Practice Systems, Dr Nathan Pinski.

"If you fail to fulfil [a] requirement because the practitioners don't want to do it or are unable to... then the practice will forfeit the whole of its ePIP payment."

Practices will likely hit targets by uploading the "easiest" shared health summaries, which may in themselves not be useful information but "just achieving a statistical result", he says.

He also envisages a scenario where practices "game the system" by having a practice nurse rather than a doctor upload the summaries, defeating the purpose.

A health department representative says the eligibility requirements could be met by one GP uploading the required number of shared health summaries per quarter on behalf of a whole practice.

The same Christmas Eve email also foreshadows a "tiered performance-based incentive arrangement" to be introduced later this year, though the department says this will be the subject of further consultation with GPs.

After consultations, the tiered arrangement would take effect at the earliest from the August to October reference period for the November payment quarter.

The eligibility criteria for the other four requirements of the ePIP remain unchanged.

Tags: [Government](/tags/government), [E-Health](/tags/e-health), [Pip](/tags/pip)

## Author: David Rowley



David has worked at *The Australian*, the (now defunct) *Daily Mirror* and Australian Association Press. He has written for *The Observer* (UK), *The Sydney Morning Herald* and been a correspondent for publications such as *Billboard* and *The Hollywood Reporter*.

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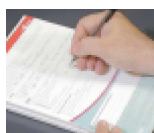
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