

# My Health Record

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## Statement of intention

My opinion essay is written in a style intended for a newspaper or website. I took the approach of a casual but informative discussion around My Health Record (MHR), and I was careful to thoroughly cover the background of the issue in order to lead readers to a logically sound conclusion.

The concept of electronic health records has existed in theory for decades, however only now is it starting to be feasible in practice. I find this an interesting issue since it involves an ethical debate as well as more practical problems with implementation. In my piece, I try to convey this passion and genuine interest in the issue without appearing emotionally swayed.

Specifically, the My Health Record was first posed as a possible solution to the perceived problems with the traditional decentralised system in 2010. It was then announced in 2012 as a trial program through some parts of Australia. I cited this ongoing trial a number of times in my piece, as such a long term and significant study adds to the plausibility of my arguments.

Despite having a complicated stance on the issue, I tried to state my contention clearly and strongly - namely, that if Australians are to get any benefit from the My Health Record, they must embrace it and accept its initial flaws. This statement might be confusing to some readers, since I am not taking a definite stance on one side or the other. Despite this, my clear explanation and explicit wording enable me to discuss the issue and convince readers to think deeply, gently leading them to my conclusion.

The tone of my article is generally civil and respectful of both sides. This is necessary since my contention has potential to create angst among both sides of the polarised debate. I intentionally switch between a neutral, informative tone and a stronger conclusive tone. In the first, I convey facts and statistics, subtly encouraging readers to think critically. This allows me to set up a solid basis for my broader conclusions which are further supported by emotive and inclusive language. The distinction between these two tones provides variety and interest in the piece, as well as striking a balance between critical, logically-minded readers, and more emotionally-swayed readers.

The language in my piece is intentionally simple and clear. I spent a significant

time explaining the background of the issue, ensuring that readers enter the debate afresh and without preconceptions. However, this strategy makes it easy to appear uneducated and blatant, so I included subtle phrases of more educated and obscure language to attract a broader audience.

The arguments in my essay are clearly laid out so that readers can immediately separate pieces of evidence and link them together. This is more efficient than a continual flow of information because readers may become bored or overwhelmed with a single cohesive piece. However, the conclusion of each paragraph clearly states how it relates to my contention and the discrete arguments are all related in that they form a sequential progression towards my conclusion.

## Evidence

- Blue Mountains trial (executive report, 2012)
- 15% -> 70% uptake with training
- cost is unclear
- “moving in the right direction” according to public
- federal government
- digital copy of records
- stored 30 years after death
- not clinically reliable
- existed since July 2012 (many technical failures)
- “purpose of records does not change”
- “helps pharmacists and non-treating health professionals”
- 6 million consumers registered (54% F, 46% M)
- 14 thousand healthcare providers registered
- 8 million documents uploaded
- 24 million prescriptions uploaded

## Bibliography

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