Hi Caroline

Thank you for extending the period for us to provide feedback on the Review of health providers' accessibility to Medicare card numbers.

Victorian health services use different systems to process Medicare numbers so the impacts are different at different health services. However in general

- The current process to obtain Medicare numbers is variable, and often highly manualised - however in general any system that results in the inability to submit bulk requests is likely to have a substantial impact on the current workload of hospitals
- Importantly, hospitals often seek Medicare numbers at time of booking (rather than appointment) - which allows for a simple verification and supports increased flow through the particular service (eg outpatients, radiology, pathology etc). If health services were unable to do this before the patient attends the appointment - this will have a significant impact on the length of time needed to process people attending appointments - and potentially the efficiency of the system
- Rural health services are particularly concerned that they will be disproportionately impacted because of size and few centralised processes
- Services are unclear what impact the change from PKI certificates would have although generally concerned that it would further reduce batching options and require a longer individualised process

Victoria would advocate for a system that continues to support batching of Medicare information for hospitals and would be happy to work with you further to explore possible options - that would also meet the increased security goals of the Commonwealth.

regards

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