

HEALTH INFORMATICS SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA INC.

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"Informatics Enhancing Health"

September 10th, 1994.

Dr Patrick Nugawela,
National President,
Australian Medical Informatics Association,
P.O. Box 89,
SCARBOROUGH, 6019.

Facsimile: (09) 448 3817

Dear Patrick,

Thank you for your letter of September 9th, 1994 posing a number of specific questions about the Health Informatics Society of Australia (HISA) and the 'associate' category of membership. In response to your questions, I am able to advise the following:

1. The executive committees of the following organisations have agreed in principle to associate with the Health Informatics Society of Australia: HIANSW, AHIA (SA), AHIA (Qld.), HISA (ACT), HISA (Vic.) and the North Coast Nursing Informatics Group. The membership of HIANSW have formally voted in favour of association with HISA. HISA (Vic.) will vote on the issue at a general meeting to be held next Monday night (September 12th, 1994). The other groups will be voting on the issue over the next few months.

The following Special Interest Groups have also been formed under the auspices of HISA: Health Informatics Standards SIG; Coding in General Practice SIG; Health Communication Network SIG; Electronic Communication SIG; and the Australian Nursing Informatics Council SIG. These groups generally comprise members who are already financial members of other associations of groups.

A number of other organisations and professional bodies have indicated that they wish to join HISA as affiliate members.

2. The current members of the HISA Board are as follows:

Ian Graham	Director, Centre for Health Informatics and Deputy Director of Medical Services, Austin Hospital.
Peter Adkins	General Practitioner, Birkdale Medical Centre, Brisbane.
Branko Cesnik	Director of Medical Informatics, Faculty of Medicine, Monash University.
Joan Edgecumbe	Nurse Consultant, Health Industry.
Evelyn Hovenga	Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Queensland.
Michael Kidd	Senior Lecturer / Director of Undergraduate Education, Department of Community Medicine, Monash University.
Wendy Swinkells	Medical Informatics Coordinator, Faculty of Medicine, University of Newcastle.
Don Walker	Honorary Research Associate, School of Medicine, University of Adelaide. Consultant in Health Informatics.
Chris Wright	Director of Medical Informatics, Physician and Intensivist, Monash Medical Centre, Melbourne.

3. A copy of the Certificate of Incorporation is enclosed.

4. There is no formal relationship between HISA and any state based bodies, other than through their associate or affiliate membership. All such bodies, including those which have chosen to use the name 'HISA', e.g. HISA (Vic.), are separately constituted organisations.

HISA does not have a state-based organisation structure. HISA Groups are the basic organisational units of HISA. Such groups may be region, discipline, special interest, state or territory based.

5. The category of individual HISA membership has only been established to accommodate members whose needs cannot be met by an existing HISA Associated Group e.g. overseas members. The HISA Constitution specifically indicates that, in the first instance, prospective members will be referred to appropriate HISA Groups rather than being offered individual membership. The membership fee for individual HISA membership has also been set at higher level than that of the majority of groups in order to discourage this form of membership. I can see no likelihood of competition for members arising between HISA and its constituent groups.

6. HISA membership was made available to registrants for the second national Health Informatics Conference (HIC'94). In accordance with (5), prospective members were directed to state-based groups in the first instance. Of 370 registrants, I believe that less than 30 opted for individual HISA membership. I regret that I have not been able to confirm the exact number over the weekend but will do so and advise you when the information is available.

7. As indicated above, HISA unquestionably sees its future as being group rather than individually based.

Thank you for your invitation to HISA to become a member organisation of AMIA. We will consider this offer in due course. In the meantime, however, the issue of the Medinfo bids demands urgent attention. I reiterate the questions contained in my letter of September 9th, 1994. Would you be prepared to support the following course of action?

1. Provision of a written agreement in principle to associate with HISA, subject to the endorsement of the AMIA membership.
2. Agreement that an Australian Medinfo would be conducted under the auspices of HISA.
3. Joint submission of the Sydney and Melbourne bids under a single covering letter signed by both of us (see previous draft).

I look forward to your early response.

Yours sincerely,



Ian Graham,
Chairman, HISA Board.

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"Informatics Enhancing Health"

September 13th, 1994.

Dr Patrick Nugawela,
National President,
Australian Medical Informatics Association,
P.O. Box 89,
SCARBOROUGH, W.A., 6019.

Facsimile: (09) 448 3817

Dear Patrick,

In response to your latest enquiry, I am able to advise the following:

- As acknowledged in your letter, HISA "will not seek to usurp the various other organisations by competing for individual membership directly". I have been able to confirm that there are now only 16 individual members of HISA, nine of whom are either honorary or overseas members.

I am, however, a little troubled by the distinction that you have drawn between HISA representing *organisations* and *individuals*. I would hope that the HISA Representative nominated by an organisation that has associated with HISA would represent both the organisation and the individuals within it. Clearly, there will be some *issues* that are best addressed at the level of the participating organisation and others that would be more appropriately dealt with through the national forum.

- HIANSW has not yet formalised its association with HISA by way of a "formal agreement". As I indicated in my letter, the HIANSW membership have, however, voted in favour of such an association. I will forward an application form to you as promised in due course.
- The Health Informatics Society of Australia is incorporated under Section 7 of the Victorian Associations Incorporation Act 1981. Its registered number is A0029718B as indicated on the certificate attached to my last letter.

- The Sydney Medinfo bid has been prepared by a Medinfo Bid Committee under the auspices of HISA. A number of enthusiastic individuals and groups have been involved in its preparation.

I look forward to your confirmation that AMIA agrees in principle to associate with HISA, that an Australian Medinfo would be conducted under the auspices of HISA and that the Sydney and Melbourne bids could be submitted together on this basis.

Yours sincerely,



Ian Graham,
Chairman, HISA Board.