

MEDIA RELEASE**19 MAY 2017****AUSTRALIAN APPOINTED TO UNITED NATIONS KEY HEALTH/PRIVACY ROLE****A/NSW PRIVACY COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCES APPOINTMENT OF
MR CHRIS PUPLOCK AM**

A/NSW Privacy Commissioner, Dr Elizabeth Coombs, is pleased to announce the appointment of Mr Chris Puplock AM to the **UN TAskforce (Thematic Action Stream IV) on Health Data**.

This TAskforce has been established by the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Privacy, Professor Joseph Cannataci, as one of the five Thematic Priorities of the UN Human Rights Council for report to the United Nations General Assembly.

The TAskforce is mandated to report to the General Assembly of the United Nations in October 2018 on *Improving safeguards and remedies for privacy and health data*. The TAskforce has international membership under the leadership of Dr Steve Steffensen of the Dell Medical School in Austin, Texas. Mr Puplock is the only Australian member of this TAskforce which will examine, amongst other things, the commodification of personal data, especially in sectors traditionally considered to be particularly sensitive, such as medical and health data.

Dr Coombs noted that the decision to make the management of health data one of the key concerns of the Special Rapporteur, and that the report would be made directly to the General Assembly, highlight the international consensus developing around the need to collect and manage sensitive personal health data with particular care.

Mr. Puplock has made major contributions in the fields of both privacy and Human Rights advocacy. He was NSW Privacy Commissioner from 1999 to 2003 during which time the *Health Records and Information Privacy Act (HRIP Act) 2002* was passed by NSW Parliament, an Act which recognises the importance of privacy to quality healthcare, public and personal health outcomes. Mr Puplock currently serves as Chair of the Board of the Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network of NSW.

As Dr Coombs said "Health information is so sensitive; it's potentially not just information about the individual, but it can be about their children, siblings, and parents. I am delighted to announce Chris Puplock's appointment. I can think of no-one better suited to this role. His appointment by Professor Cannataci is a significant recognition of the contribution that Chris and NSW can make to the international discussion and the direction of health privacy."

Mr Puplock commented: "Privacy is a basic human right, and health privacy in particular has never been more relevant than it is today. The balance between privacy rights, and the use of health data for treatment, and public policy development is a critical issue which we need to get right. I am pleased to be a part of the UN Health Privacy TAskforce which is tackling the issues facing health privacy head on."

Interviews:

Mr Chris Puplock AM and Dr Elizabeth Coombs are available for interviews to discuss privacy issues affecting the NSW community.

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Work of the UN Special Rapporteur on Privacy:

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Privacy/SR/Pages/SRPrivacyIndex.aspx>

*TAskforce = Thematic Action Stream IV of Mandate of UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Privacy.