

## ‘Do no harm’ in implementing contact tracing app

### Media Statement

5 May 2020

The Australasian Institute of Digital Health (AIDH) and the Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association (AHHA) have lent their support to the Australian Government’s contact tracing app to aid national efforts to manage and suppress COVID-19.

However, the peak bodies for public healthcare and hospitals, and technology and information professionals, are urging the Government to “do no harm” in implementing the technology.

AIDH and AHHA have developed 10 principles for the Australian Government to use in its enabling legislation.

The organisations said the inclusion of the recommended principles would increase the likelihood of more widespread adoption of the app, which is desirable for rapid contact tracing.

The [principles](#) cover communication and design, data collection “scope creep”, data security, opt-in and end dates, anonymity, usage rights, legal protection and evaluation.

AIDH CEO Dr Louise Schaper said: “As healthcare, technology and information professionals, we believe a secure and well-designed app, where its single purpose is to speed up contacting people exposed to COVID-19 to minimise the spread of the virus – is both a key part of an efficient public health effort and will build trust with the Australian people.

“As advocates for information privacy and the data rights of consumers, we contend that the principle of ‘do no harm’ should be applied to the implementation of health technology.”

Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association Chief Executive Alison Verhoeven said that while the contact tracing app offers undoubted benefits, it should complement rather than replace conventional tracing methods.

Also, privacy and trust issues need more attention: “Many people are holding off on downloading the app because they remain concerned about privacy and government use of the data. We trust that the principles we are releasing today, if adhered to, will provide the extra reassurance that people need”, Ms Verhoeven said.

[DOWNLOAD Principles for the COVID-19 Contact Tracing App \(PDF\)](#)

Media contacts:

Heather Hunt AIDH - [Heather@digitalhealth.org.au](mailto:Heather@digitalhealth.org.au)

Nigel Harding AHHA - [nharding@ahha.asn.au](mailto:nharding@ahha.asn.au)