International Medical Informatics Association (IMIA)
c/o Health On the Net
Chemin du Petit-Bel-Air 2
CH-1225 Chene-Bourg, Geneva
Switzerland

Dr Stephen Crocker, Chair, ICANN Board
steve.crocker@icann.org

Mr Fadi Chehadé, President and CEO, ICANN
fadi.chehade@icann.org

Mr Cherine Chalaby, Chair, New gTLD Program Committee
cherine.chalaby@icann.org

Cc: newgtld@icann.org

12025 Waterfront Drive, Suite 300

Los Angeles CA 90094-2536 USA

Sent by email

Dear Sirs

SUBJECT: Safeguards for Health Domains

On behalf of the International Medical Informatics Association (IMIA) I am writing to call your attention to the critical need to ensure appropriate safeguards for the health-related Internet domain names.

The International Medical Informatics Association (IMIA) is the world body for health and biomedical informatics. As an "association of associations", IMIA acts as a global bridging organization for its constituent Member Societies (60 nationally-based health and biomedical informatics associations around the world) and through its network of more than 50 Academic and Corporate Industrial Members. IMIA draws on the expertise of more than 80,000 individuals within its member societies and organizations, who contribute their academic and scientific expertise directly or through their activities within IMIA's Special Interest Groups and Working Groups, which form the core of IMIA's scientific activity. IMIA provides leadership and expertise to the multidisciplinary, health focused community and to policy makers, to enable the transformation of healthcare in accord with the world-wide vision of improving the health of the world population.

IMIA has operated for nearly 50 years old, is an independent, not-for-profit international scientific organization, and is an NGO in official relations with the World Health Organization, and a Liaison A category organization in cooperation with ISO. IMIA plays a major global role in the application of information science and technology in the fields of healthcare and research in medical, health and bio-informatics. The goals and objectives of the association include:

- ➢ promoting informatics in health care and research in health, bio and medical informatics;
- ➢ advancing and nurturing international cooperation;
- ➢ stimulating research, development and routine application;
- ➢ moving informatics from theory into practice in a full range of health delivery settings; and
- ➢ furthering the dissemination and exchange of knowledge, information and technology.

Health information, data, products and services have an important and unique status on the Internet. It is imperative that operators of health domains manage them for and in the public interest. In the context of allocation of the new Internet domain names, the governmental advisory group to the ICANN has proposed a set of generic safeguards for health-related names and stressed that they "may require further targeted safeguards". The safeguards are inadequate for health and do need significant revision. Strengthening them will not only address the concerns of the community, but will also enable providers and businesses to flourish in a safe and assured environment.

You have seen the many concerns expressed by the health community on .health alone, one of the most contested names, in the form of GAC advice, public comments, community objections, and objections submitted by ICANN's independent objector. The concerns raised so far have not been sufficiently addressed, yet the applications are proceeding.

We therefore call on the ICANN Board to delay the allocation of .health and other health-related names until adequate safeguards, and baseline conditions for their implementation, are in place. Towards that end, it is essential that ICANN relies on the health community to lead the process to produce a new set of safeguards for health, to be discussed with the ICANN Board at the London ICANN meeting in June, 2014.

Signed on behalf of IMIA

Dr Peter J. Murray
CEO, IMIA

21 January, 2014   Geneva, Switzerland