

THE WORLD MEDICAL ASSOCIATION, INC.

L'ASSOCIATION MEDICALE MONDIALE, INC
ASOCIACION MEDICA MUNDIAL, INC



Ms. Heather Dryden, President
Government Advisory Council
of ICANN
e-mail: gacsec@icann.org

August 11th, 2012

Request for GAC Early Warning to ICANN on Top Level Domain Name Proposals for “.health”

Dear Ms. Dryden,

The World Medical Association (WMA) is the global federation of National Medical Associations representing the millions of physicians worldwide. Acting on behalf of patients and physicians, the WMA endeavors to achieve the highest possible standards of medical care, ethics, education and health-related human rights for all people.

It has come to our attention that in the context of the new gTLD program, four applications have been submitted to ICANN for the top level domain (TLD) “.health”. We recognize the value to the health marketplace that, collectively, these names could create.

However, as health professionals, we are concerned about the possibility that ICANN could assign these TLDs without adequate assurances that they will be operated in the interest of global public health.

We consider it of the greatest importance that “.health” is created as a trusted place for health information and health care practice. The public should be able to rely that the operators of “.health” TLD are trusted entities which operate these TLDs in the interest of global public health, and are capable of ensuring that the attribution of any sub domain meets certain base line conditions which protect public health. For example, the illegal promotion and sale of medicines on the Internet (which pose a serious risk to individual and public health) should be banned. Likewise, preserving the confidentiality of patient information, and enforcing consumer protection during the collection, storage, use and exchange of data online should be assured. These are just examples of the many issues that require careful consideration.

The health Internet is a vital means of health information access worldwide, and trusted and reliable “.health” top level domain based on the public interest and broad-based, multi-stakeholder consensus principles would be a critical resource for the global community. We understand that the current applicants intend to sell the “.health” TLD on a ‘first-come, first-served’, wholesale and auction basis, placing private interests ahead of the public interest.

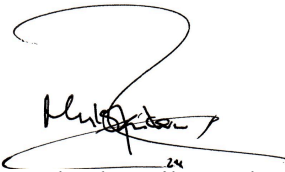
We urge the GAC to consider the lack of the public health dimension in the current “.health” TLD proposals as a serious reason for making the applications for “.health” TLD the subject of an Early Warning and subsequently to GAC advice to the ICANN Board.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely



Dr. José Luiz Gomes do Amaral
President



Dr. Mukesh Haikerwal AO
Chairman of Council