



Easyclaim waits for easy solution

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In updated figures supplied to The Sheet yesterday by Medicare, Easyclaim represented just 1.8 per cent of patient claims as at October 2008. The hold up with Easyclaim seems to lie with doctors' unwillingness to participate. There is no sign-up registration process for the patient, so, theoretically, it should be able to outpace the online project easily.

"Easyclaiming is not getting much attention from doctors," said a doctor we contacted yesterday through the Australian Medical Association.

"It was really pushed as a cost saving exercise by government; the banks also get fees out of it; the patient doesn't have to go to the Medicare office; but there really isn't anything much in it for the doctor.

"I think in the end they came up with some kind of incentive for doctors because it was looking to us like there was something in it for everyone except the doctor, who had to do everything."

Easyclaiming was going to free up Medicare offices to sign up people for the access card, so that imperative has gone.

Commonwealth Bank is the current Easyclaim market leader, with NAB and ANZ also in the hunt for what is, so far, a very tiny market.

Tyro Payments is finalising its beta version of Easyclaim's great white hope — the integrated solution that works within HCN's popular PracSoft and Blue Chip practice management software packages. The product is still in accreditation with Medicare but is expected to be on the general market by January.

PracSoft is in 3000 mainly general practice surgeries and Blue Chip is in 800 specialists' surgeries.

HCN also markets the almost ubiquitous Medical Director software that is used by 17,000 or 85 per cent of computerised doctors' surgeries.

Tyro managing director Jost Stollman said the banks' stand-alone Easyclaim systems have not been accepted in the market.

"When I say it has not been accepted, I mean you can deploy the solution but that doesn't mean anything if the practice is not actually processing the claims on it.

"Think about it. The doctor's waiting room, people lined up, babies screaming, you are not going to go through a complicated, error prone process."

Tyro announced last week that it had successfully completed a new round of capital raising, though the amount was not disclosed. Tyro Managing Director Jost Stollman told The Sheet that Primary Health Care Limited, the owners of HCN, had taken a significant shareholding in Tyro.

“It’s a nice sign of support and engagement for our common endeavour in the health care market.”

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