

Annex 1

Response to questions and various motions following the parliamentary committee meeting of 30 January 2019

Safe and secure exchange of information

Because of increasing digitalisation in healthcare, information security has become a key pillar of policy for, and implementation and supervision of the sector. I have asked the Dutch institute for standardisation (NEN) whether existing NEN standards for healthcare infrastructures can and need to be tightened, for instance in the form of end-to-end encryption. This implements the motion submitted to the House by Merel van Kooten-Arissen (2018/19 session, 29 515, no. 176), requesting such a study.

This year I will not only reassess public involvement in Z-CERT but also investigate scope for making participation in Z-CERT or a similar organisation mandatory for all healthcare institutions, in stages if necessary. This implements the motion submitted to the House by Corinne Ellemeet (2018/19 session, 29 515, no. 177), requesting such a study.

Data Protection Authority fines

At the parliamentary committee meeting of 30 January 2019 I undertook to get back to the question concerning the number of fines imposed on parties in the healthcare sector by the Data Protection Authority (AP) last year. On further enquiry, the AP noted that no healthcare institutions were fined because of data breaches. The AP informed me that it preferred alternative methods of enforcement such as threatening to stop a certain data processing operation. This usually proved sufficient. However a number of investigations are ongoing on which the AP cannot comment, as is to be expected. It is therefore not known whether they involve any healthcare institutions. The Data Protection Authority will publish its findings on its website in due course.

Data exchange and privacy

In talks with the sector about the roadmap, I was regularly asked to provide a permanent information resource on issues of privacy and patient consent for data exchange, to give the sector confidence in getting electronic data exchange off the ground. To that end, and in cooperation with the sector and the Data Protection Authority, I set up the temporary GDPR helpdesk for the healthcare sector.¹ The government also held several information meetings for the sector. I will reflect on how such information provision could be made permanent and report back to the House in the autumn.

Patient's right to medical secrecy

As I pledged at the parliamentary committee meeting of 30 January, I will before summer present my views on the proposal of the Dutch federation of patients' associations on establishing a patient's right to medical secrecy.

¹ See <https://www.avghelpdeskzorg.nl>.