FIPA

BC FREEDOM OF
INFORMATION
AND PRIVACY
ASSOCIATION

February 20, 2017

Honourable Terry Lake
Minister of Health
Victoria BC
By E mail: hlth.minister@gov.bc.ca

Re: Compensating victims of PharmaNet privacy breach for cost of ID theft protection

Dear Minister Lake,

We are writing to you regarding the privacy breach involving PharmaNet and the letter sent by your ministry to the victims of that breach.

After advising them of the fact their personal information has been "viewed" as a result of the breach, the letter goes on to tell them "…the information gathered could possibly be used as a starting point for identity theft."

The letter proceeds to outline measures these victims can take to minimize the risk of identity theft, including "engaging the services of a credit monitoring company".

As you probably know these services are not free, but the letter from your ministry says nothing about the government picking up the cost of these and other services. This is surprising to say the least.

When your ministry contacted victims of the last PharmaNet breach in 2014, that notice included an offer to pick up the cost of the recommended ID theft mitigation measures.

http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/b-c-pharmanet-hit-by-hacker-1-600-accounts-breached-1.2704446

We do not see why you have failed to do the same thing for the 7500 British Columbians who have been victimized in this latest breach.

It can't be lack of funds, as the Premier has stated that the government has a surplus in the billions of dollars that she says she plans on returning to taxpayers.

In light of these facts, it would be perverse for you to not cover the cost of the measures your ministry has recommended these people undertake to protect themselves following the failure to keep their personal information secure.

We hope that you will see fit to 'give back' some of the current surplus to these British Columbians who have been put in this position as a result of your failure to adequately protect their sensitive personal information.

Sincerely,

Vincent Gogolek

Executive Director

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