



29th November 2009

Rebates for Cataract Surgery from 26 November 2009

APHA has been advised that the Minister for Health and Ageing will make a new determination under section 3C of the *Health Insurance Act 1973* giving effect to new cataract rebates with retrospective operation. The following items will attract the following rebates from immediately after midnight on 25 November 2009:

- 42698 - \$375.95 (schedule fee), \$282.00 (75% of schedule fee)
- 42701 - \$231.75 (schedule fee), \$173.85 (75% of schedule fee)
- 42702 - \$491.85 (schedule fee), \$368.90 (75% of schedule fee)

Item 42718 (complex item) expires at midnight 25 November 2009 and will not be replaced. Any further updates in relation to these items will be provided on Latest News for MBS Online. MBS online is available at <http://www.mbsonline.gov.au/>

NHRC Consultation

On Wednesday, a delegation including APHA President, Chris Rex, Vice President, Richard Royle and CEO Michael Roff participated in a consultation Health Minister Nicola Roxon on the National Health and Hospitals Reform Commission Report focussing specifically on the private sector.

The consultation forum, which was organised at the request of APHA, included representatives of the private hospitals and health insurance sector. Discussions focussed on options for increasing the role of the private hospital sector in service delivery including the potential to increase contestability for treating certain classes of publicly funded patients. The need for nationally consistent regulation that applied equally to public and private hospitals, particularly in relation to safety and quality was also discussed. The Minister also expressed interest in drawing on private sector expertise in developing a national system for activity based funding for public hospitals.

Productivity Commission

This week, APHA lodged a supplementary submission to the Productivity Commission to respond to erroneous statements about private hospital practices contained in a submission by the Queensland Nurses Union.

The supplementary APHA submission can be found at:
http://www.pc.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/92592/subdr071.pdf

Workforce Training Survey

Each year private hospitals train thousands of medical, nursing and allied health students. However our sector's contribution towards training and education in healthcare is often overlooked. APHA is conducting an extensive member survey to calculate the total amount of training that the private sector is currently carrying out, and to identify the barriers to more training being provided.

Key decisions about the future of training and education in the healthcare workforce are being considered by the Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Council and the soon to be established

National Workforce Agency that will replace the National Health Workforce Taskforce. APHA will use the results of this survey to ensure that the work that private hospitals are currently doing is not overlooked. The survey will help us to make a strong case for further funded training places in private hospitals, as well as for the involvement of the private hospital sector in the planning of clinical training.

The survey can be completed electronically and is available on the www.apha.org.au website homepage. This is a comprehensive survey and will take some time to complete. All the results from the survey will be collated together and *no individual hospital will be identified*. Please take the time to complete the survey and ensure that your hospital is included – even if your hospital does not currently carry out training. It is important to have as high a response rate as possible to give the survey strong credibility.

If you have questions regarding the survey email [Peter Thomas](mailto:Peter.Thomas@apha.org.au) at the APHA Secretariat.

Patient Centred Surgery Strategy for Victoria

This week the Victorian state government released its strategy for surgery in Victoria's public hospitals from 2010-2015. The strategy sets out to provide a picture of how public hospital surgical services will be developed over the next five years and how to best meet patient and community needs. The document can be accessed at http://www.health.vic.gov.au/surgery/surgery_strategy_2010-2015.pdf

APHA has written to the Victorian Health Minister in support of the strategy and indicated our willingness to engage with the public sector to assist them to achieve their goals.

Parliamentary Library Research Paper Released : Should we expand the use of pay-for performance in health care?

The Parliamentary Library this week released Research Paper no. 12 for 2009-10: *Should we expand the use of pay-for-performance in health care?* The research paper can be found at: <http://www.aph.gov.au/library/pubs/rp/2009-10/10rp12.htm>

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