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SAVE LIVES: CLEAN YOUR HANDS DAY – 5 MAY 2009

On 5 May, Australia is joining WHO's Save Lives: Clean Hands Day. The aim of this day is for all WHO members states to pledge their commitment to hand hygiene by 2010. Australia is taking part by promoting the National Hand Hygiene Initiative which is being rolled out across all public and private hospitals.

The ACSQHC has developed a customisable media release for hospitals to use in their local media. If you would like a copy of the media release for your hospital, contact APHA Public Affairs Manager, Lisa Ramshaw on Lisa.Ramshaw@apha.org.au

Latest NSW/QLD Exceptional Drugs List available from APHA

The latest edition of this list, which identifies a list of high cost drugs which used to attract a separate health fund benefit, is now available. Even though the contracting environment has changed so much and most high cost drugs are now bundled, this Committee meets regularly to review the list for accuracy in light of additions/deletions/amendments to the PBS. Members may find the list useful as a reference document for identifying high cost drugs in use in private hospitals when working out bundled pharmacy items in contract negotiations. Please contact Barbara Carney, APHA's Director of Policy at Barbara.carney@apha.org.au if you would like a copy of the list.

REGISTER NOW FOR THE 29th ANNUAL APHA NATIONAL CONGRESS

Visit APHA's new Congress website <http://www.apha.consec.com.au/> for more details about this year's event to be held 11 – 13 October at the Grand Hyatt Melbourne.

REQUEST FOR DATA ON SENTINEL EVENTS - REMINDER

Two weeks ago, we wrote to all APHA members to request data on the number of sentinel events in your facility in 2007/2008 in order for private hospital sector data to appear in the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Healthcare's National Report 2009.

The data you provide will be strictly protected and will not be used for purposes other than the Commission's 2009 report. We would appreciate receiving your data by **Friday 8 May 2009** so that it can be consolidated and forwarded to the Commission.

SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUCCESSES AT PRIVATE HOSPITALS

Does your hospital have a successful solution to help the environment? Do you have an environmentally sustainable program or an innovative answer to waste disposal? Does your hospital have a kitchen garden where items grown are used in the hospital or are grown for therapeutic purposes? If you have any environmental programs running at your hospital, please contact Lisa Ramshaw, APHA's Public Affairs Manager who is planning the June edition of Private Hospital Magazine. Lisa can be contacted at Lisa.Ramshaw@apha.org.au or on 02 6273 9000.

FINAL ACCC REPORT INTO MEDICAL INDEMNITY PREMIUMS RELEASED

The Assistant Treasurer, Chris Bowen, has released the ACCC's sixth and final monitoring report on medical indemnity insurance premiums, giving them what he called "a clean bill of health". The ACCC has been conducting informal price monitoring on medical indemnity premiums to assess if they were actuarially and commercially justified as part of the 2002 medical indemnity reform package, introduced in response to the collapse of UMP. The ACCC was asked to monitor medical indemnity premiums for three years to assess whether they were actuarially and commercially justified. In 2006, this monitoring was extended for a further three years.

The ACCC report shows a continuation of the trend over the last several years of lower average premiums in real terms, lower premiums for most specialty medical insurance in real terms and a more viable financial position for insurance providers. The sixth report covers the 2007-08 financial year and the key findings include:

- real average medical premiums fell for the fifth year in a row, to \$5,392 in 2007-08, a reduction of 15.5 per cent from the previous year;
- premiums charged by the five medical indemnity insurers were actuarially and commercially justified; and
- net assets for the medical indemnity industry increased to \$619 million in 2007-08, an increase of 17 per cent from the previous year.