



14 March 2010

## Means testing of PHI rebate defeated

On 9 March, the Senate voted to defeat the Government's plan to means-test the 30% private health insurance rebate, which would have introduced 10 tiers of eligibility for assistance with the cost of private health insurance premiums. APHA consistently opposed this proposal since it was first announced by the Government in the 2009 Budget, and made a number of submissions to parliamentary inquiries on the legislation, as well as speaking publicly on the issue.

## Award Modernisation

Following implementation of the new Modern Awards on 1 January 2010, Fair Work Australia is continuing to receive applications to vary some of these industrial instruments. The majority of these applications relate to requests for clarity regarding the wording of certain clauses. Applications are currently under review relating to both the Nurses Award and the Health Professionals and Support Services Award and it is possible that some amendments may be made in the coming months.

On behalf of APHA, PHAQ is responding to key issues lodged and members will be kept informed of any significant decisions. As it is likely that some modifications may be made to these two Awards, employers are encouraged to subscribe to "Award Updates" via the Fair Work Australia website to ensure that they have the latest version of these two awards – [www.fwa.gov.au](http://www.fwa.gov.au)

## APHA is Coming to your State – 2010 Member Forums

APHA is about to embark on an exciting campaign to promote the value of Private Hospitals in Australia to the community. This campaign will showcase the vital work private hospitals undertake every day and aims to mobilise the community to support private hospitals in the lead up to this year's Federal Election.

Please come along to learn more about this new initiative and how you can be a part of it, hear about APHA's key strategic focus areas in 2010 and spend a bit of time networking with colleagues from other hospitals in your state.

Invitations have been sent this past week and we encourage all hospital executive team members, admissions managers and marketing managers to attend.

Adelaide – 17 March 2010, 9.00am – 11.00am, St Andrews Hospital  
Brisbane – 23 March 2010, 3.00pm – 5.00pm, The Wesley Auditorium  
Sydney – 26 March 2010, 8.30am – 10.30am, North Shore Private Hospital  
Melbourne – 29 March 2010, 12.00 – 2.00pm, Epworth Hospital  
Perth – 30 March 2010, 5.00pm – 7.00pm, The Perth Clinic

## **National Pain Summit**

The first national pain summit was held in Canberra on 11 March. The Australian Pain Strategy was launched at the Conference. Speakers stressed that untreated chronic pain was estimated to cost the economy \$34 billion per year, and that many people suffering from chronic pain waited unacceptable periods for treatment, especially in the public hospital sector.

More information can be found at <http://www.painsummit.org.au/>

## **Spinal cord injury, Australia 2007-08**

The AIHW has released a new report on spinal cord injury. In 2007-08 there were 362 new spinal cord injuries [SCI], the majority of which [79%] were due to traumatic causes. SCI were most frequent in the 15-24 year age group [30%], although trends show a significant increase in the average age at injury from 38 years in 1995-96 to 42 years in 2007-08. Males accounted for 84% of traumatic SCI. Transport-related injuries (46%) and falls (28%) were the main contributors to traumatic SCI. Rates for the NT and WA were significantly higher than the national incidence rate, which is explained by the rate of vehicle accidents in those areas.

The report is at <http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10812>

## **Save that Date!**

The 2010 APHA National Congress will be held from 17-19 October 2010 at the Hilton in Sydney. Information will be posted in the coming weeks about this event which will be APHA's 30<sup>th</sup> National Congress. Mark your calendars!