



## APHA Vital Signs

A WEEKLY ROUND-UP OF NEWS VITAL TO THE PRIVATE HOSPITAL INDUSTRY

8 August 2010

### FEDERAL OPPOSITION ANNOUNCES HEALTH POLICY

On 5 August the Leader of the Opposition, Hon. Tony Abbott MP, announced the Coalition's health policy. The policy sets out plans to develop a "community-controlled" public hospital system, and announces funding for hospital beds and more nurses. The Opposition announced that, if elected, it would retain the current system of private health insurance rebates. APHA welcomed this announcement. CEO Michael Roff said:

"The APHA today welcomed the Coalition's announcement to retain private health insurance rebates in addition to funding additional public hospital beds. We need a strong public and private hospital system to ensure Australian's get the care they need when they need it. Maintaining the health insurance rebates recognises that the 3 million Australians who use private hospitals every year take pressure off the public system. The Coalition has raised the bar and we look forward to announcements from the ALP in relation to their commitment to ensuring a viable private health sector."

The Coalition's health policies are available at <http://www.liberal.org.au/Policies.aspx>

### HAND HYGIENE AUSTRALIA LAUNCHES NEW ON-LINE BULLETIN

HHA has launched a new e-bulletin. The bulletin is intended to keep hospitals up to date on the Progress of the National Hand Hygiene Initiative (NHHI). It will also provide news, developments, latest research findings and information regarding HHA and the NHHI. Information in the e-bulletin is targeted at those involved in the day to day aspects of the NHHI. To read the bulletin click on

<http://www.hha.org.au/ForHealthcareWorkers/e-bulletin.aspx>

HHA has also released a new Hand Hygiene Compliance Application (HHCApp), an online data management system that has superseded the previous data base tool. HHA says HHCApp will "allow seamless data input online and report generation, and is a significant step in the sustainability of the NHHI". It is free for any participating site to access. All that is required is an internet browser. For more information

follow this link

[www.hha.org.au/HHComplianceSystem.aspx](http://www.hha.org.au/HHComplianceSystem.aspx). In addition HHA have developed a PDA version of HHCApp for data collection using a Hewlett Packard PDA (model – HP iPAQ212). If you would like more information on the PDA application contact Kel Heard at [Kelvin.heard@austin.org.au](mailto:Kelvin.heard@austin.org.au) HHA are also exploring other options for electronic data collection with other mobile devices such as smart phones.

## **OPHTHALMOLOGISTS CALL FOR INCREASED FUNDING FOR SERVICES TO CHILDREN**

The Australian Society of Ophthalmologists (ASO) and the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists (RANZCO) have called for “urgent increases” to Medicare rebates for paediatric ophthalmology services. The two groups say that hundreds of Australian children will miss out on vision correcting surgery if rebates are not improved. The ASO and RANZCO say funding neglect is rendering paediatric ophthalmology a dying medical specialty, with less than 25 doctors nationwide currently working predominantly in this field – that is in both public and private sectors. The joint media release is at [http://aso.asn.au/images/stories/Media\\_Release ASO-RANZCO PATEINT REBATES MUST RISE OR AUSSIE CHILDREN WILL MISS OUT ON VITAL EYE SURGERY.pdf](http://aso.asn.au/images/stories/Media_Release_ASO-RANZCO_PATEINT_REBATES_MUST_RISE_OR_AUSSIE_CHILDREN_WILL_MISS_OUT_ON_VITAL_EYE_SURGERY.pdf)

## **CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS – PRIVATE HOSPITALS MAGAZINE**

The October edition of *Private Hospital* magazine will be themed around Emergency Departments and ICUs. If your hospital would like to feature the work undertaken in your ED or ICU, please contact Lisa Ramshaw, APHA’s Public Affairs Manager at [lisa.ramshaw@apha.org.au](mailto:lisa.ramshaw@apha.org.au). Deadline for submissions will be 13 August.