



APHA Vital Signs

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

15 December 2013

APHA Office Christmas Shutdown

This will be the last Vital Signs newsletter for 2013. The APHA secretariat will be closed for the Christmas shut-down period from Friday 20 December 2013 from 5 pm and will re-open 2 January 2014 at 8.30 am. APHA wishes you a merry Christmas and a happy and safe new year.

APHA National Congress – Register Now

Early bird registration closes on 7th February! If you are having time off for the holidays, why not [register now](#) to avoid missing out on these great savings!

The 33rd APHA National Congress will be held on the 23-25 March 2014 at the Brisbane Convention Centre.

PHIAC Data – Detailed Analysis from September Quarter 2013

The Private Health Insurance Administration Council (PHIAC) released their data for the September 2013 quarter. Key findings in September were:

- The level of membership remained flat—with 47% of the population having private health insurance. This was up 0.1 percentage point on the preceding quarter.
- The total number of hospital episodes (public and private) increased by 6% over the quarter—to 1,038,300 episodes.
- Health insurance funds paid \$3,128 million for hospital treatment benefits—up 6.9% compared to the previous quarter.

A detailed analysis of the September quarter statistics from PHIAC are now available from the members area of the APHA website.

This paper has been prepared by Meke Kamps, Research and Data Manager. Please direct any queries you may have to Meke on 02 62739000 or at research@apha.org.au.

Federal Government Competition Review - Terms of Reference

The Federal Government has released a draft terms of reference for the Federal Government Competition Review. These are detailed in [Terms of Reference document](#) together with a broad indication as to the process.

APHA will prepare a submission at the appropriate time.

Private Health Insurance Legislation Amendment Bill 2013 – Tabled 13 November 2013

The Private Health Insurance Legislation Amendment Bill 2013 was tabled on 13 November. The bill proposes simplified implementation arrangements for indexing the Government's contribution to the Rebate. Since the Labor Government's decision to increase the Rebate by the lesser of CPI or the increase to Private Health Insurance Premiums (enacted into law in June 2013), there has been concern about the complexity of implementing this reform.

This new bill will mean that all rebate percentages are adjusted uniformly each 1 April by a single adjustment factor. The proposed adjustment factor will be a ratio "representing the proportion of the

increase in the consumer price index compared to the average private health insurance premium increase". The adjustment will apply to premiums that are paid or payable in the 12 months starting on that 1 April. The first adjustment will be made on 1 April 2014.

Further details are provided

at: http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Bills_Legislation/Bills_Search_Results/Result?bld=r5133

Confirmation of participation - Round 17 Private Sector National Hospital Cost Data Collection (NHCDC)

Hospitals should have received an email in the last week from the Independent Hospital Pricing Authority (IPHA) inviting them to participate in Round 17 of the Private Sector National Hospital Cost Data Collection (NHCDC)

Documents should be returned to IPHA by 18 December 2013. If you think you will have any issues with this time frame please contact: Angela on 02 8215 1123.

Private NHCDC Round 16 Report Publication

Please be advised that the Round 16 Private NHCDC Report was published on Friday and is available on [IHPA's website](#).

Phase-Out of the Net Medical Expenses Tax Offset

The Government is consulting on draft legislation and explanatory materials to implement the 2013-14 Budget measure to phase-out the net medical expenses tax offset (NMETO).

The Government is inviting submissions from all interested individuals and organisations by Friday, 17 January 2014.

For more information, please visit:

<http://www.treasury.gov.au/ConsultationsandReviews/Consultations/2013/phase-out-net-medical-expenses>

Guidelines for control of multi-drug resistant Gram-negatives Carbapenem Resistant Enterobacteriaceae (CRE)

The ACSQHC has developed Recommendations for the control of multi-drug resistant Gram-negatives: Carbapenem Resistant Enterobacteriaceae to alert healthcare professionals to the emerging threat represented by CRE in Australia. These guidelines provide recommendations in relation to:

- reducing community and individual risk from CRE
- detection and surveillance for CRE
- control measures to reduce cross-transmission, and
- laboratory screening methods.

For more information, please visit the [Commission's web site](#).

APHA National Procedure Banding Schedule Update with Effect from 1 January 2014

There have been amendments to some MBS descriptors with effect from 1 January 2014 and therefore please find on the APHA website (members area) an updated National Procedure Banding List effective 1 January 2014.

Should you have any queries, please don't hesitate to contact [Andrea Versteegen](#) or telephone 02 6273 9000.

On the Radar - Issue 156

On the Radar is a summary of some of the recent publications in the areas of safety and quality in health care. Some of this week's content includes:

Supporting doctors in raising concerns

Examining professionalism

Polypharmacy and medicines optimisation: Making it safe and sound

International Journal for Quality in Health Care

On the Radar is available via email or as a PDF document from
<http://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/publications-resources/on-the-radar/>

APHA, PO Box 7426, Canberra BC, ACT 2610