



APHA Vital Signs

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

31 March 2013

APHA Office Closed for the Easter Public Holidays

The APHA secretariat will be closed on Friday 29 March 2013 and Monday 1 April 2013 for the Easter public holidays. APHA wishes you a happy and safe Easter.

Chemotherapy – Senate Inquiry

Last Thursday the Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs held open hearings in Sydney. They took evidence from a range of stakeholders including DoHA and from Dr Leon Clark and Margaret Duffy of Sydney Adventist Hospital, Adventist HealthCare. The Inquiry has received 34 submissions including several from the private hospital sector.

APHA participated in a stakeholder forum held at Parliament House recently which was attended by DoHA representatives David Learmonth and Felicity McNeill and several parliamentarians. At this forum, APHA emphasised that concerns voiced by members have come from the full range of players – big, small, NFP, for profit, major hospitals and small regionals. APHA has also stressed to the Department that the scope for passing costs onto patients is limited by legal and contractual obligations so that the point at issue was whether hospitals can continue to offer services. The full text of the APHA's submission can be downloaded from the Senate Inquiry's [website](#) (submission 24).

Restrictions, Exclusions and Waiting Periods Continue to Cause Complaints

The Private Health Insurance Ombudsman (PHIO) has published its annual [State of the Health Funds Report](#) for 2011-12. "Complaints to the Private Health Insurance Ombudsman (PHIO) remained steady during 2011. However the Ombudsman has noted that Private health insurance was very much 'front of mind' for consumers with www.privatehealth.gov.au receiving its highest number of unique visits in July 2012 since it went live in April 2007.

Amongst issues that caused higher levels of complaints were restrictions and exclusions on hospital policies and pre-existing condition waiting periods. There was a 3.7% growth in membership for the year ending 30 June 2012 and fund membership retention figures ranged from 70% to over 90% during the reporting period.

Second Tier Renewal Reminder

Please note that the Second Tier status of some private hospital facilities is due to expire on 30 June 2013. The closing date for applications is Friday, 26 April 2013, and the next meeting date of the Second Tier Advisory Committee is Friday, 24 May. This is the last meeting before 30 June 2013. Those hospitals wishing to apply for continued eligibility need to submit an application to the APHA, details regarding the process and a performance application can be downloaded from the APHA website <http://www.apha.org.au/industry-resources/>

Should you require further information please contact Andrea Versteegen at APHA on andrea.versteegen@apha.org.au or 02 6273 9000.

APHA Wants to Know How We Can Help You

Do you need help measuring up against the national performance indicators? As attention within the sector shifts towards the need to publically report against safety and quality indicators. APHA

is reviewing the services it provides so that hospitals are better supported in understanding their performance. APHA invites you to express your views as to the services that you would like APHA to provide by completing a short survey. You can review and complete this survey [online](#) or you can download a [PDF](#) from the APHA website.

Reminder to nurses and midwives to renew registration

The Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (National Board) is urging nurses and midwives to look out for an email reminding them to renew their registration by 31 May. Over 340,000 nurses and/or midwives with general or non-practising registration are due to renew their registration with the National Board.

To ensure that you receive your reminder email, please update your contact details using AHPRA's secure online service: www.ahpra.gov.au:

Save the Date for Private Hospitals Week : 12 – 18 May 2013

Private Hospitals Week is fast approaching, an email was sent on Wednesday to all hospital champions. If you did not receive the email or would like to update your hospital's champion, please contact Lyndal Bailey at Lyndal.bailey@apha.org.au or on 02 6273 9000.

We will be sending out an email this week to our hospital champions regarding this year's Private Hospital Week's video competition.

On the Radar - Issue 120

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:

Quality at a glance: using aggregate measures to assess the quality of NHS hospitals

Prescribing trends before and after implementation of an antimicrobial stewardship program

Redesigning Primary Care: A Strategic Vision To Improve Value By Organizing Around Patients' Needs

Unlocking information for coordination of care in Australia: a qualitative study of information continuity in four primary health care models

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