



Connecting online

The rise of social media presents many opportunities for healthcare professionals in Australia

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The weather is warm, the decorations are up in the shopping centres and the kids have almost finished school for the year – it must be almost Christmas time. I don't know about you, but this year has flown by for me. It has been an incredibly busy year for APHA and for our member facilities too. They have now lived through a year with the new national standards and have identified areas of strengths and weaknesses. The standard around partnering with consumers has resulted in a lot of discussion and debate this year. There are many articles in this issue of *Private Hospital* that highlight the great work undertaken in the communities of private hospitals and on behalf of consumers, and I love seeing all of the diverse activities happening around the country.

As regular readers of *Private Hospital* will know, I am a passionate supporter of social media in healthcare and believe social media is one tool hospitals can use to engage with consumers. In October I was fortunate enough to attend the Mayo Clinic's Social Media Week in Rochester, Minnesota in the US to learn from and network with some of the leading people in healthcare social media management. It was truly wonderful to sit in a room of 400 passionate people who use social media every day to make a difference in patient lives. I learned a lot over the course of the week and as this edition of the magazine goes to print, I am organising social media workshops for APHA members in key cities around Australia over the coming weeks. Social media provides so many potential opportunities for healthcare professionals in Australia and I hope that these workshops will inspire some of our members to get involved and reap the benefits. To connect with APHA on social media, like us on Facebook at Australia's Private Hospitals or on Twitter at @priv8hospitals. We love to share stories from our members and judging from the response of our more than 7,000 fans on Facebook, they like seeing what our members do too. If you have a story for our magazine, our Facebook page or Twitter, let us know.

In the meantime, on behalf of everyone at APHA, I wish you and your family a wonderful Christmas and a safe and happy New Year. Let's just hope 2014 goes a little slower than 2013 did.

P.S. Registration is now open for the 2014 APHA National Congress. We have a great line-up of speakers, networking opportunities and exhibitors planned for the 23-25 March. Check out www.aphacongress.com.au for details and to register! PH

