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## Partnering with patients a winning model for Bethesda Health Care

A program integrating regular consumer feedback into hospital care and processes has been a winner for Bethesda Health Care, with the model winning an Australian Private Hospitals Association (APHA) Award for Excellence.

Bethesda Health Care won the Consumer Partnership and Engagement Award for its Consumer Partnership Committee that has opened up communication between the hospital, carers, patients, families and the executive team.

APHA CEO Michael Roff said the hospital showed leadership in working with their patients for a better health care experience.

“Private hospitals deliver high quality care to Australians. They are committed to providing care when it is needed, by the doctor of choice, in the hospital of choice. In the current health care environment the services private hospitals provide will be in high demand and patients of hospitals like Bethesda Health Care will know they are getting excellent care, but also care that is informed from talking to patients and understanding their needs.”

After Bethesda Health Care implemented its Consumer Partnership Committee a number of changes were made around the hospital. These included: changes to the volunteer processes for supporting patients – including developing a ‘concierge’ role to take patients from admission to rooms; and a specific volunteer role for the surgical ward providing both physical and emotional help.

The committee is involved at a strategic level in the hospital and their input directly impacts hospital decisions. They are also advocates for patients.

Judges in the awards said the program was ‘a good initiative’ and welcomed the involvement of consumers ‘in the planning, design, delivery and implementation of this initiative is worthy of high commendation’.

Mr Roff said consumer partnership is a key performance indicator for hospitals in the national accreditation standards implemented in January last year.

“This model of consumer partnership is just one way private hospitals are working with their communities to deliver even better care to patients,” he said.

APHA Awards for Excellence judging panel:

Tony Lawson, Chair, Consumer Health Forum

Adjunct Professor Debora Picone AO, CEO, Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care

Michael Roff, CEO, Australian Private Hospitals Association

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The Australian Private Hospitals Association (APHA) is the peak industry body representing the private hospital and day surgery sector. The private hospital sector treats 4.5 million patients a year, including treatment of a third of chemotherapy, 60 percent of all surgery, 74 percent of all elective musculoskeletal surgery and 80 percent of rehabilitation.

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