

MEDIA RELEASE

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CHA CALLS FOR FURTHER CONSULTATION REGARDING MEDIBANK 'QUALITY & SAFETY' MEASURES

The CEO of Catholic Health Australia, Australia's largest provider grouping of non-government health, aged and community care services, Mrs Suzanne Greenwood today called on Medibank Private to work constructively with hospitals in the implementation of robust safety and quality standards.

Catholic health providers, including Calvary Health Care, are all committed to the highest standards of safety and quality in our hospitals. CHA members have been working with the Australian Commission on Quality and Safety in Health Care (ACSQHC), which has brought together clinical experts, public and private hospitals, governments and consumers to develop and implement an evidence-based, consistent, national approach to safety and quality standards to health care treatment that all Australian patients can look forward to.

It is therefore deeply disappointing to see Medibank Private attempting to unilaterally impose contract terms that would penalise hospitals for events that do not take account of either clinical context or the risk profile of individual patients. All health care interventions bear some degree of risk – a more sophisticated approach involves people working together to find evidence-based solutions that actually improve patient care.

"We are also concerned that if Medibank Private's inflexible approach becomes widespread, it may ultimately result in private patients finding it harder to access care in the private sector – putting further pressure on the already over-burdened public system," Mrs Greenwood said today.

"We call upon Medibank Private to positively engage with hospitals, funders and the Safety and Quality Commission to ensure that hospitals meet the highest evidence-based, clinically appropriate guidelines," Mrs Greenwood added.

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CHA represents the largest single grouping of non-government health, aged and community care services in Australia.