

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **HCF launches new website tool to allow members to compare hospital performance**

**Sydney, 27 June 2013** – Australians wanting medical treatment in the hospital sector will be able to assess potential hospital providers quickly and easily following the launch today of a convenient interactive tool hosted by HCF, Australia's largest not-for-profit private health insurer.

Part of HCF's drive to improve patient information and transparency, the new function uses data from the Australian government's myhospitals.gov.au to allow patients to compare hospital performance against Government defined measures for safety and quality.

The initiative is the latest move by HCF to make healthcare information more accessible to members and non-members alike. Users of the unique tool will be able to compare up to 10 hospitals at a time against the following measurables:

Instances of staphylococcus aureus bacteraemia - SAB, more commonly known as golden staph - a serious infection associated with hospital care. The benchmark rate for golden staph is no more than 2 infections per 10,000 bed days.

Hand hygiene, based on records of whether a health provider has appropriately washed and sterilised their hands, a critical step in reducing hospital-acquired infections such as golden staph. The minimum benchmark for healthcare workers correctly adhering to hand hygiene is considered to be 70%.

HCF Chief Medical Officer, Dr Andrew Cottrill, said: "HCF believes strongly that patients should have access to better information so they can make a more informed choice about where to receive hospital care. This new tool is an important step in that direction. We hope it helps usher in a new era of information transparency and empowerment of patient choice in hospital care. Ultimately, if it leads to improved standards of safety and quality in hospital and better patient outcomes, that has to be a good thing."

The initiative follows HCF's recent release of separate rankings of member satisfaction with different hospitals, and the relative performance of 20 NSW public hospitals on key safety and quality measures.

The tool can be found on the HCF website at [www.hcf.com.au/hospitalsafetyandquality](http://www.hcf.com.au/hospitalsafetyandquality)

All SAB and Hand Hygiene rates presented in the HCF Safety and Quality web tool are sourced from the [www.myhospitals.gov.au](http://www.myhospitals.gov.au) website, which is maintained by the National Health Performance Authority (NHPA).