

# AUSTRALIAN COMMISSION ON SAFETY AND QUALITY IN HEALTH CARE

MEDIA RELEASE

7 May 2012

## **WORLD EXPERTS ON INTENSIVE CARE AND PATIENT SAFETY RETURN TO THE HOME OF THE RAPID RESPONSE SYSTEM AND MEDICAL EMERGENCY TEAM**

*'Australia plays host to seventh annual international conference'*

Over 500 of the world's leading experts in the areas of intensive care and patient safety will meet in Australia for the first time from 7 to 9 May 2012 at the seventh annual *International Conference on Rapid Response Systems and Medical Emergency Teams*.

Hosted by the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care (ACSQHC), the conference at Sydney's Convention and Exhibition Centre will discuss innovative solutions to recognise and respond to the clinical deterioration of patients in hospitals. A key focus will be enhancing the successful Rapid Response System (RRS) and Medical Emergency Team (MET) concept, which was pioneered in Australia more than 20 years ago by Prof. Kenneth Hillman.

Holding the conference in Sydney where the RSS and MET began, is a fitting tribute to the significant international contribution that Australia has made in the field of intensive care and patient safety.

Studies in Australia and from overseas demonstrate that the RSS and associated MET concept have been responsible for helping reduce the cardiac arrest rate in hospitals by up to one third\*. The system and concept is now used in the majority of Australian, British and North American hospitals and continues to spread rapidly in Europe and other parts of the world.

On the RSS, Prof. Hillman, comments: "As health professionals the wellbeing and safety of patients is our primary focus. The rapid response system and medical emergency team concept has enhanced our ability to deliver an even better level of service and quality of care, through a system of checks such as the simple use of a chart placed at the end of every patient's bed to regularly monitor their vital signs.

“It is pleasing to see that such a simple and effective system has made such an important contribution to patient welfare and hospital process around the world and that Australia has led the way and continues to lead in this field. I am looking forward to the Conference and to see how together as health professionals we can make a good system even better, through the sharing of insights, research and best practices.”

Prof. Debora Picone AM, Chief Executive Officer - ACQSHC, says: “Australia is leading the way internationally to make sure patients who deteriorate in hospital are safe. We are the only country in the world to introduce a mandatory national safety and quality health service standard for recognising and responding to clinical deterioration in acute hospitals. From 1<sup>st</sup> January 2013 all hospitals will need to be assessed and accredited against the standard.”

Delegates attending the three day conference include doctors, nurses, patient safety specialists, policy makers, health care teams, administrators and researchers; all involved in recognising and responding to clinical deterioration.

The theme for this year’s conference is ‘Revolutionising the Rapid Response System – Past, Present and Future’. The conference program will cover a wide range of associated subjects from recognising clinical deterioration, escalating care, clinical communication and responding to clinical deterioration through to organisational systems and implementation of recognition and response systems. There will also be a focus on the specialist areas of paediatrics, obstetrics and mental health.

Detailed information on the conference can be obtained through visiting [www.rapidresponsesystems.org](http://www.rapidresponsesystems.org).

- ends -

#### Notes to editors

\* Chan PS, Jain R, Nallmothu BK, Berg RA, Sasson C. Rapid response teams: A systematic review and meta-analysis. Archives of Internal Medicine 2010; 170: 18-26.

#### About ACSQHC (Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care)

ACSQHC is a government agency established by the Commonwealth, with the support of State and Territory governments. It leads and co-ordinates national improvements in safety and quality in healthcare across Australia through a number of programs, publications and resources that support healthcare professionals, healthcare organisations and healthcare policy makers; working with patients and carers to deliver safety and quality healthcare initiatives nationally.

#### **For further information, please contact:**

Nathan Quigley/Kim Viney  
Horizon Communication Group  
t: 02 8572 5600  
e: [Nathan@horizoncg.com.au](mailto:Nathan@horizoncg.com.au) or [kim@horizoncg.com.au](mailto:kim@horizoncg.com.au)