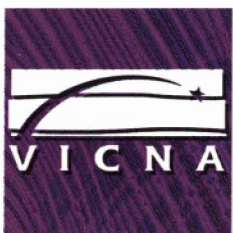




Tasmania

This is a brief report to welcome Cate Byrne, the newly appointed sub-editor from Tasmania. Cate has enthusiastically accepted the role and will be presenting her first Tasmanian state news report in the next issue of the journal.



Victoria

The week beginning 4 May 1998 saw the release of the report entitled 'Infection Control in Victorian Public Hospitals'. This report followed an extensive audit process that began in 1996. The audit – which was in two parts: the literature review and the public hospitals survey – was



initiated by the Department of Human Services and prompted by numerous concerns about infection control practice. These included a belief that the public perceives infection rates in hospitals to be high, plus issues relating to the reuse of items designated as single-use.

The aim of the project is to provide the department with baseline information on hospital policies, practices and resources and enable the development of a framework for best practice in infection monitoring and control in Victorian hospitals. As such, it is wide-ranging and imposes significant obligations on hospitals in areas such as:

- the role of hospital management in infection control;
- cleaning, disinfection and sterilisation of medical/surgical instruments and equipment;
- risk management programs: minimising infection risks;
- surveillance activities;
- occupational health and safety: staff health and immunisation;

- education and training;
- environmental cleanliness;
- the physical environment: its relationship to infection control;
- maintenance and surveillance of the physical environment;
- prevention of the emergence and spread of antimicrobial resistant microorganisms, and
- strategies for addressing issues identified through the survey.

With the release of the report went the provision of limited funds to address, by the end of the financial year, some of the matters raised. This assistance is available on a matched basis only. In the longer term, the Department of Human Services requires all public hospitals to submit a costed monitoring and infection control plan by 31 October 1998, a significant undertaking for all of us.

Internet addresses for the Infection Control Taskforce reports are as follows:

- main report: <<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/ahs/infcon2/index.html>>.
- literature report: <<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/ahs/infcon/index.html>>.

Ross Peck, sub-editor

Diary of events

31 July – 1 August 1998
The Health Services Association of NSW
and Outpatient Consulting
Fifth National Conference and Exhibition:
'Post Acute Treatment and Care in the Home',
featuring PICC Line Course
Novotel Brighton Beach
Sydney, New South Wales
 Tel: (02) 9818 3344 Fax: (02) 9555 7522
 E-mail: hsansw@ozemail.com.au

13-17 September 1998
Hospital Infection Society
Fourth International Conference:
'Effective Infection Control: Ahead of Change'
Edinburgh International Conference Centre
Edinburgh, Scotland
 Website: <http://www.his.org.uk>