EMBARGOED to 22 August 2012

Australian launch of Global Green and Healthy Hospitals Network

A new global network of hospitals and healthcare organisations working together to reduce the environmental footprint of the healthcare sector internationally will be launched in Sydney today.

The Global Green and Healthy Hospitals Network (the Network) will be launched at a health policy forum on greening the health care sector being held by the Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association and the Climate and Health Alliance at Luna Park at 10.30am. This event is one of a rolling series of launches taking place around the world in 2012.

The Network will be launched by Dr Peter Orris, Professor and Chief, Occupational and Environmental Medicine, University of Illinois, Senior Advisor to Health Care Without Harm (HCWH), which has led the establishment of the Network.

"It's fantastic to see the Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association become a founding member of this network," said Dr Orris. "There is great enthusiasm for this network around the world with organizations representing over 5000 hospitals and health care settings already signed up globally."

The Network will initially focus on implementing the Global Green and Healthy Hospitals Agenda (the Agenda) which provides a comprehensive framework for hospitals and health systems to achieve greater sustainability and to contribute to improved public environmental health. The Agenda focusses on ten action areas, including reducing waste, minimizing the use of harmful chemicals, increasing energy efficiency and buying safer and more sustainable products. Hospitals which join the Network endorse the Agenda and commit to begin by implementing at least two of these goals.

AHHA CEO Prue Power AM said: "Healthcare organisations internationally are recognizing they have a responsibility and an opportunity to provide leadership on this issue and that they can reap significant benefits for health at the same time.

"It's time for the Australian health sector to think about how well prepared we are to deal with the impacts of climate change over coming years and decades as well as to take action to reduce the health sector's carbon footprint. This is why the AHHA has joined the [Global Green and Healthy Hospitals Network](#), and we encourage all Australian health sector organisations to join."

Climate and Health Alliance Convenor Fiona Armstrong said: "Hospitals have a big environmental footprint, use a lot of energy and water, and generate tons of waste, which includes many environmental pollutants. Many hospitals engaging in these kinds of sustainability initiatives are finding they not only deliver environmental benefits but also provide financial savings as well as better patient outcomes and higher staff morale."

Media enquiries: Fiona Armstrong convenor@caha.org.au 0438 900 005

Prue Power, CEO AHHA, 0417 419 857