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MEDIA RELEASE
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**RISK MANAGEMENT AWARD GOES TO
LITTLE COMPANY OF MARY HEALTH CARE**

The Australian Healthcare Association (AHA) has presented an award to Little Company of Mary Health Care's (LCMHC) National Integrated Risk Management Initiative for excellence in risk management services.

The award was presented at the Australian Healthcare Association and Australian College of Health Services Executives joint Congress in Canberra last week as part of the Baxter National Healthcare Innovation Awards.

AHA Executive Director, Ms Prue Power, said the award was presented to Little Company of Mary Health Care in recognition of its work to develop a standardised approach to integrated risk management across all of its services.

Little Company of Mary Health Care provides a range of clinical services in the public and private sectors, including acute, sub-acute and aged care in both metropolitan and rural settings across 5 states. LCMHC is best known by the Calvary name in under which it provides services in the various states.

"This initiative highlights a commitment to reducing clinical adverse events, and puts the identification and management of risks firmly on both the clinical and corporate agenda," said Ms Power.

Results of the initiatives have shown a significant increase in understanding about risk management principles and the application of risk management tools, policy and protocols, with over 250 Little Company of Mary Health Care representatives trained in risk management.

On the consumer side, performance indicators have been developed to enable the monitoring and review of consumer input and feedback, and a consumer participation guide has been developed to maintain the focus on this important aspect of the strategy.

Aside from the reduced exposure to risk for patients, there has been a direct cost-benefit from a 15% reduction in standard medical indemnity rate for Little Company of Mary Health Care in the 2003-04 period - a total saving of \$150,000.

"The benefits to patients and staff in terms of reduced exposure to risk through programs such as this can be huge," said Ms Power.

"Health care is an intrinsically risky business, but this project demonstrates what can happen when consumers, staff and stakeholders have confidence in the risk management processes in place across health services," she said.

"We congratulate the Little Company of Mary Health Care on taking out this national award."

For more information, please call:

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