

## **THELMA connects to public health through Wentworth Area Health Service Contract**

ICSGlobal has met a major THELMA milestone ahead of schedule with the first group of public hospitals, Wentworth Area Health Service, signing a three year contract to use THELMA.

Wentworth Area Health Service is one of seventeen area health services that make up NSW Health. Wentworth is comprised of the three local government areas of Blue Mountains, Hawkesbury and Penrith and accounts for about five per cent of the total NSW population.

Wentworth Area Health Service will initially use THELMA to conduct online insurance eligibility checks and has the option to progress to processing inpatient hospital claims for private patients that use any of its three public hospitals – Nepean Hospital, Blue Mountains District ANZAC Memorial Hospital and Springwood Hospital.

Graham Jenkins, acting CEO of Wentworth Area Health Service, said: "Patients are recognising the quality of care delivered in our facilities and some are choosing to be treated as privately insured inpatients. For these patients, we recognised the need to be more prepared and equipped to process eligibility checks, to provide timely information on insurance coverage and to detail accurately the patient out-of-pocket expenses. To date, we have used band-aid measures and time consuming and inefficient manual processes to do this. THELMA will automate and streamline some of our administrative processes and provide a better experience for the patient. This will assist us to achieve our goals of improving health care services to the community."

Mr Jenkins agrees that the public health system recognises the changes occurring in private health insurance, such as simplified billing arrangements and the need to comply with informed financial consent legislation.

"Health care services in Australia are changing, and patients' expectations are changing, which is fuelling a rapid increase in the need for real time information in order to meet the demands of our evolving health care system. The potential benefits to everyone involved in healthcare from having access to the types of information that THELMA can retrieve and deliver are enormous, not just in the obvious areas of cost reduction and improved customer service, but through the development of better business relationships between healthcare providers, insurers, suppliers, consumers and the government," said Mr Jenkins.

According to Greg King, Healthcare Business Director for ICSGlobal, THELMA will deliver multiple levels of value to Wentworth Area Health Service.

"THELMA provides an instant, cost effective, single point of access to the health funds, eliminating the need for Wentworth Area Health Service to develop separate technology and business processes to connect to up to 44 health funds. In addition, with the increased pressures that the public health system as a whole is facing, THELMA has an important role to play in helping management to provide the best possible service and improve their business processes," Mr King said.

Tim Murray, Managing Director of ICSGlobal, said: "This contract with Wentworth Area Health Service is indicative of just how committed the management of our public health system is to improving the national health system. We've always seen the public health system as a critical cornerstone of our vision for THELMA to become the health industry clearing house, and it's a comforting endorsement that the business case for public hospitals is compelling enough for them to want to fast track connectivity to THELMA."

### **About ICSGlobal**

ICSGlobal's core business is the ownership and operation of THELMA. For more information visit [www.icsglobal.net](http://www.icsglobal.net).

### **About THELMA**

THELMA is positioned to become the clearing house for the health industry. It is the first and only transaction exchange in Australia that has been designed for the entire health care industry. It offers hospitals, health insurers and medical practitioners a low cost, no risk technology solution to exchange health business information securely over the Internet in real time, to cut administrative and technology costs, re-engineer tired healthcare processes and offer much improved patient care and member services. For further information visit [www.thelma.com.au](http://www.thelma.com.au).

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