



NEWS RELEASE

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Glanzing Clinic in Vienna Is First PVC-Free Pediatric Unit Worldwide

Vienna, June 13, 2003: The Pediatric Clinic Glanzing at the Wilhelminen Hospital of the Vienna Hospital Association (KAV) serves as an excellent example for a PVC phase out from health care. The Neonatology Unit of the Pediatric Clinic Glanzing has become the first Neonatology Unit worldwide to announce it will manage completely without PVC in the future, according to KAV General Manager Professor Dr. Eugen Hauke.

The Pediatric Clinic began phasing out PVC in 2001. Currently, almost all the medical products with so-called invasive uses, such as catheters and tubing used in the Pediatric Clinic, are PVC-free. Pacifiers, IV bags, blood filters, respiratory therapy equipment, feeding tubes and other tubing used at the Clinic are made from alternative materials. PVC is used only for a few non-invasive products, such as urinary bags, because there are no alternatives on the market yet. However, this is the case for only about 3 % of all products used, and even with those, hospital management expects that PVC-free products of the same performance quality will be on the market within one to two years.

The Vienna Hospital Association began phasing out PVC products in 1989. It has been very successful in avoiding PVC in packaging and switching to PVC-free medical devices in some cases, such as in the Pediatric Clinic Glanzing.

In addition to PVC-free medical devices, KAV strategy also involves construction work, where PVC has been avoided for floorings and window frames. PVC-free alternatives have also been substituted for overshoes, gloves, bed mattresses and aprons. Altogether, the PVC share in the hospital waste has dropped from 10% to 0.37% in the last 10 years, which represents nearly a 100% reduction.

The Vienna Hospital Association has also recently joined Health Care Without Harm (HCWH) Europe. In June, HCWH and the Vienna Hospital Association organized a seminar, "Health Prevention means Avoiding PVC." The event discussed the newest scientific evidence on the risks of PVC and DEHP in medical devices and the possibilities of avoiding them in health care. Its purpose was to motivate other hospitals and health care professionals to pursue the same goal of phasing out PVC in health care facilities.