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Bethesda infection control manager Helen Bucknell, left, and Yasmin Naglazas at one of the hand-hygiene centres.

# You have to hand it to Bethesda

**Bethesda Hospital will showcase its infection prevention and control initiatives to an international audience next month after winning the Asia Pacific Hand Hygiene Excellence Award.**

Hospital staff will receive the recognition at the international congress of the Asia Pacific Society of Infection Control in Shanghai in April.

The hospital's infection control manager Helen Bucknell said the program was crucial for protecting patients, staff and visitors from infection.

All staff and volunteers receive education on hand hygiene, while patients and visitors are all provided with information and encouraged to use the hand-hygiene products placed throughout the hospital

and patient rooms.

"It doesn't matter who you are – everyone coming into this facility, including our engineers and administration staff, receive education," Ms Bucknell said.

"Health-care acquired infections have lifelong consequences and multi-modal hand-hygiene programs improve patient and healthcare workers' safety."

The awards were created in 2010 to recognise hospitals supporting the World Health Organisation's first Global Patient Safety Challenge: Clean Care is Safer Care.

After being shortlisted to the six finalists, WHO auditors subjected Bethesda Hospital to a rigorous audit, which resulted in being named the winner last week.

"We were the first private hospital in WA to report our

hand-hygiene compliance data to Hand Hygiene Australia, and our results over the past five years have been impressive, showing continuous improvement," Ms Bucknell said.

Bethesda began its hand-hygiene program in 2009 and along the way tested various products and methods of engaging patients, staff and volunteers.

The hospital now has four credentialed hand-hygiene auditors.

Hospital CEO Yasmin Naglazas said the international recognition was "an amazing achievement for all of our staff, volunteers and doctors, and we are honoured to showcase our hand-hygiene initiatives with other healthcare providers next month".