

Media release

Thursday 25 July 2019

Hospital pharmacy a proud player in hepatitis success

The Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia (SHPA) has welcomed the focus on hepatitis treatment advances – reflecting on the successful Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme listing of hepatitis C medicines in 2016 that enabled broad treatment for thousands of Australians – ahead of 2019 World Hepatitis Day on Sunday.

This week Hepatitis NSW highlighted that less than a third of people living with hepatitis C in the state have been treated for the virus, urging the remaining 58,000 people to ‘take advantage of new highly effective cures’.

SHPA Chief Executive Kristin Michaels says the recent history of promising new hepatitis medicines has been a bright, albeit temporary success story.

‘As organisations mark [Hepatitis Awareness Week](#), SHPA lends its voice to awareness-raising efforts to mitigate the health burden of untreated hepatitis C in the Australian community.

‘The listing of hepatitis C medicines on the PBS in 2016 allowed some hospital pharmacy departments – with the capability to do so – to step up and proactively provided treatments to patients, as community treatment systems had not yet been established.’

Ms Michaels says with hepatitis C dispensing volumes from hospitals now a third of the early 2016 peak, the baton has passed from hospital pharmacy to primary care as the main setting for this important patient care.

‘After an initial rush of prescriptions, SHPA supports sustained focus on ensuring many more Australians are able to access hepatitis C medicines, especially those from vulnerable populations.

‘We are proud of our members who rose to the challenge over the last few years, cementing their role in reducing the burden of hepatitis C on the community; their commitment to evidence-based practice will ensure further engagement with government medicine priorities in the future.’

– ends –

For more information contact:

Nick Sharp-Paul, Head of Strategy and Communication
nsharp-paul@shpa.org.au | 0411 098 838

About SHPA

The Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia (SHPA) is the national, professional, for-purpose organisation for leading pharmacists and pharmacy technicians working across Australia’s health system, advocating for their pivotal role improving the safety and quality of medicines use. Embedded in multidisciplinary medical teams and equipped with exceptional medicines management expertise, SHPA members are progressive advocates for clinical excellence, committed to evidence-based practice and passionate about patient care.

