

Media release

Friday 17 April 2020

‘Telepharmacy’ will protect Australians in isolation and our hospitals during COVID-19

The Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia (SHPA) has welcomed ‘telepharmacy’ consultations as an important move to protect the health and safety of Australians receiving medicines advice in isolation or providing and receiving care in hospitals, while improving medicines safety at the critical transition of care juncture between hospital and home.

Announced today by the Federal Government, from next Tuesday 21 April pharmacists will be able to conduct Home Medicines Review (HMR), Residential Medication Management Review (RMMR) MedsCheck and Diabetes MedsCheck for eligible Australians via video or videoconference.

SHPA Chief Executive Kristin Michaels says the changes support medicines safety and reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission at a time of ongoing uncertainty.

‘In March, on behalf of our members and their colleagues working at the COVID-19 coalface in our hospitals, [SHPA called for regulatory change](#) to allow consultant pharmacists to check-in on vulnerable Australians without face-to-face visits.

‘Today’s announcement that these critical programs can utilise telehealth technology as an emergency measure will ensure their continuation – essential to supporting optimal use of limited hospital beds – while removing risk of asymptomatic COVID-19 transmission between health practitioners and Australians managing their medicines at home.’

Ms Michaels says the Federal Government’s enabling of telepharmacy will support improvements in hospital care and medicines safety for Australians returning to the community.

‘Although Australia’s rate of new coronavirus cases is declining, the country remains vulnerable to a sudden increase, and the changes announced today will help reduce hospital readmissions by identifying and mitigating medicine-related issues as early as possible.

‘Ongoing HMRs and RMMRs will also reduce risk of hospital readmissions by providing reassurance that post-discharge medicines checks will be conducted, a safeguard further boosted by the presence of dedicated discharge liaison hospital pharmacy roles.’

– 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.

shpa.org.au |   