

# Media release

Tuesday 18 June 2024

## Healthcare workforce boost in NSW paves the way for safer pharmacist-led care

The Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia (SHPA) today welcomed initiatives handed down in the [NSW Budget 2024-25](#) handed down today by the Minns Government, to address healthcare workforce shortages and help relieve pressure on the state's stretched emergency departments.

SHPA President Tom Simpson says the government's \$450 million commitment to providing 400 build-to-rents apartments for essential workers in city areas and \$200 million to a range of new worker accommodation in regional and rural areas, addresses two critical issues – housing affordability and healthcare accessibility.

'The development of new worker accommodation across regional and rural areas will be a key driver to attracting healthcare workers to areas where they are needed most.

'Right now, just over three per cent of pharmacists across the country completing a Residency Training Program are doing so in a NSW hospital department, and only one in 10 of these is regionally located.

'This figure is simply too low for Australia's most populous state. Without a sustainable pharmacy workforce we put in jeopardy the viability of pharmacist-led models of care, which studies have shown time and time again improve hospital capacity and the outcomes of care for patients.

'Improving patient flow is a key feature of this government's budget with a \$480.7 million Emergency Department Relief Package, of which \$70 million is allocated to several measures to address overflowing hospitals.

'SHPA was proud to put Partnered Pharmacist Medication Charting (PPMC) on the agenda in NSW at its Ramping Inquiry, a model proven to be ten times safer for patients, who as a result spend 10% less time in hospital. We are pleased the NSW Government supported our recommendation and look forward to continuing working with key stakeholders in the Ministry of Health and our NSW members to deliver PPMC across the state.

SHPA President Tom Simpson says the NSW Government's \$274 million commitment to hiring an additional 250 healthcare workers to staff new and upgraded hospitals must include pharmacists.

'On behalf of our NSW members and their colleagues, we'd like to congratulate Premier Minns and Minister Park on their commitment to growing the healthcare workforce as part of this year's budget.'

'Due to their specialty expertise, hospital pharmacists play an integral role in freeing up doctors and nurses to provide dedicated face-to-face care, so we call on the NSW Government to ensure its much-needed workforce investment includes pharmacists and technicians.

'If we want to unblock crowded emergency departments, we need to unlock barriers to implementing safer and more efficient models of care. That means ensuring we have a pharmacist with advanced skills in place to lead them at all times.'

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**About SHPA**

The Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia (SHPA) is the national, professional organisation for the 6,100+ Hospital Pharmacists, and their Hospital Pharmacist Intern and Hospital Pharmacy Technician colleagues 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.

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