

# Media release

Friday 15 November 2019

## **‘Get involved and follow opportunity’: Tom Simpson awarded 2019 SHPA Medal of Merit**

Honouring his persistent pursuit of the advancement of hospital pharmacy and health informatics in his home state of Tasmania, Tom Simpson has been awarded the 2019 SHPA Medal of Merit at Medicines Management 2019 (MM2019), the 45<sup>th</sup> SHPA National Conference.

Announcing the award in the afternoon plenary on the Gold Coast today, SHPA President and fellow Tasmanian Peter Fowler acknowledged Mr Simpson’s energetic leadership and extensive impact on statewide pharmacy practice.

‘Under Tom’s leadership, hospital pharmacy practice in Tasmania has strengthened to a point that was unimaginable only a handful of years ago. He has made lasting impact across many sectors, including policy, acute, rural and education.

‘A member of the inaugural Health Council of Tasmania, where he advocates for medication safety and hospital pharmacy at a health policy and governance level, Tom’s broad skillset, creativity and ambition have seen him take leadership roles through which his achievements have made significant impact on broader health services in Tasmania.’

Mr Fowler says well beyond today’s accolade, Mr Simpson’s impact on health care will be continued to felt at a state level.

‘Tasmanians are now seeing more clinical pharmacists embedded in their hospitals and will soon see a state-wide multidisciplinary Safe Medication Practice Unit.

‘Through Tom has established rural pharmacy services across Tasmania so patients in rural hospitals can get the same level of pharmacy care as those in acute hospitals.

Mr Simpson, who is Executive Director of Statewide Hospital Pharmacy in Tasmania, shared some wisdom to his younger self in a heartwarming oration in front of his family.

‘The lessons I’ve learnt that have taken me from aimless to passionately engaged are: get involved; take opportunities and get out of your comfort zone; find the best mentors; and partner with people you admire and adore.

‘Whoever you partner with in life, and whatever their field of work, I hope you find someone who enriches, teaches, supports you, and makes you happy. It’s been the most important thing that’s happened to me.’

Mr Simpson also said in work, as in life, it is important to understand ‘it’s not all going to go your way’.

‘The best thing we can all do is look after yourself, look after your team, build a team of people around you who will look after you when things aren’t going well.’

– ends –

**For more information contact:**

Nick Sharp-Paul, Head of Strategy and Communication  
[nsharp-paul@shpa.org.au](mailto:nsharp-paul@shpa.org.au) | 0411 098 838

**Tom Simpson**

Mr Tom Simpson is currently Executive Director of Statewide Hospital Pharmacy in Tasmania, Director of Pharmacy, North West Regional Hospital. He is a registered pharmacist and has been a member of SHPA for 18 years. His many achievements and contributions include membership with:

- The Australian Pharmacy Council
- The Health Council of Tasmania
- Tasmanian Hospital Pharmacy Executive Committee.
- The Course Advisory Committee at the School of Pharmacy, University of Tasmania
- SHPA's Tasmania Branch for almost 15 years, including as Chair and Vice-chair
- The Australian Government's Electronic Prescribing Workgroup

**SHPA Medal of Merit**

- The SHPA Medal of Merit is awarded annually to an SHPA member in recognition of outstanding recent contributions and exemplary effort in hospital pharmacy practice.
- The Medal honours any SHPA member who has made an outstanding recent contribution or contributions to the practice of hospital pharmacy or the professional development of pharmacy in the past three years, through involvement in a particular activity or range of activities.

**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.

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