

Media release

Wednesday 30 August 2023

SHPA welcomes scope of practice review as leaders of pharmacist-led prescribing practices

The Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia (SHPA) has welcomed the Albanese Labor Government's scope of practice review, as the organisation continues to champion pharmacist-led prescribing practices in collaborative care settings, and invest in the specialty skills and recognition that are a cornerstone of safe, expanded scope of pharmacy practice.

The [Unleashing the Potential of our Health Workforce Review](#) announced last week by The Hon Mark Butler MP, Minister for Health and Aged Care, was borne from the [Strengthening Medicare Taskforce Report's](#) recommendations, and champions multidisciplinary team-based care to build trust and collaboration between healthcare professions to expand scope of practice.

[SHPA has long championed collaborative care in hospital pharmacy](#) with pharmacist-led prescribing programs in place in Australia to varying degrees for more than ten years.

SHPA President Tom Simpson says harnessing hospital pharmacists' specialty skills by expanding scope of practice will only lead to stronger healthcare systems and improved patient outcomes.

'We've spent the last ten years successfully trialling pharmacist-led prescribing programs in hospitals which have shown to be ten times safer for patients, who spend 10% less time in hospital as a result.'

'We have demonstrated these programs to Minister Butler and Assistant Minister McBride in the last few months in both metropolitan and regional hospitals, showcasing this collaborative model where pharmacists and doctors work together to achieve better, safer care, dramatically decreasing the number of medication chart prescribing errors.

'We know the model works and that it is already recognised and supported by various governments. We look forward to seeing a nationally consistent approach to collaborative pharmacist-led prescribing programs, allowing the benefits of this collaboration to reach more patients in more settings.'

SHPA looks forward to the scope of practice review and would like to see a consistent way of applying this proven model of collaborative care in hospitals and are actively advocating for a nationally recognised approach as part of the review.

Recently, SHPA announced its [National Credentialling program](#) for Partnered Pharmacist Medication Charting (PPMC) as part of its [Transformation 2024](#) agenda.

Mr Simpson says the safe and evidence-based introduction of pharmacist-led prescribing is possible thanks to ongoing growth of specialty pharmacy practice.

‘Specialty pharmacy is not the future – it is a cornerstone of our practice today.

‘In addition to pharmacist-led prescribing, specialty skills in clinical disciplines enable pharmacist-led stewardship programs in antimicrobial, anticoagulant, analgesic, and antipsychotic treatments, which also help reduce delays to treatment and the length of hospital stays.

‘As part of our [Transformation 2024](#) agenda, SHPA’s new pharmacy recognition program will recognise the unique experience of Australian pharmacists and technicians, which is a huge leap forward in ensuring we have a complementary workforce practicing at the top of scope to deliver optimal, safe and efficient patient care.’

Details of SHPA’s new pharmacy recognition program will be shared at the 81st FIP World Congress of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences ([FIP 2023](#)) in Brisbane, 24 to 28 September 2023.

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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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