

Media release

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‘Choice, leadership, and recognition’ as Pharmacy Technicians celebrated

On Australian Pharmacy Technician Day, the Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia (SHPA) has announced the appointment of a new pharmacy technician observer for its Board of Directors and established a pharmacy technician and assistants working group to help fast-track career development and recognition through the newly launched Australian and New Zealand College of Advanced Pharmacy (ANZCAP).

Pharmacy technician Tara Clayson-Fisher will be joining the SHPA Board of Directors in an observer role with Constitutional change scheduled to take place in 2024 to embed an elected Technician Director to the Board.

SHPA President Tom Simpson says these announcements, under this year’s theme of ‘Choice, recognition, leadership,’ further entrench SHPA as a truly inclusive organisation that embraces the entire pharmacy profession.

‘SHPA’s membership spans pharmacists, pharmacy technicians, and pharmacy assistants working in every practice setting across Australia. Pharmacy technicians have unique skills and a diverse career path, with ever-increasing uptake of advanced roles in dispensing, compounding, and medication reviews.

‘As scope of practice rises for pharmacists, it is vital that pharmacy technicians and assistants see their scope broaden too; and SHPA will be a key partner in the education, development, and recognition programs that underpin their practice.

‘A quarter of a century ago, SHPA embraced pharmacy technicians and assistants as members, followed by full voting rights seven years later, and eligibility for Fellowship in 2019.

‘It’s time to formalise their key perspective, infusing SHPA’s strategy with the voice of the entire profession and we are delighted to welcome Tara as the Pharmacy Technician Observer to the Board. A key figure in driving the expansion of pharmacy technician roles over the last decade in South Australia and Tasmania, the Board welcomes the valuable perspective Tara will bring to our organisation as we embark on its next stage of transformation.’

Mr Simpson says national technician leadership and new recognition pathways are timely with the ANZCAP Foundation Program now launched.

‘Professional recognition will only become more important as the healthcare sector looks to expand technicians’ scope of practice, which is why our newly launched ANZCAP program will extend recognition to pharmacy technicians and assistants in 2024.’

‘The parallel ANZCAP recognition pathways for pharmacy technicians, assistants, and pharmacists will ensure that the entire workforce is enabled to work to the top of its scope.’

Mr Simpson says these announcements are a continuation of SHPA’s long history as the only professional organisation in Australia that embraces pharmacists, pharmacy technicians, and pharmacy assistants as equal members.

‘Today this professional partnership is more visible – and more necessary – than ever, reflected in the inclusion of a pharmacy technician voice at the highest level of SHPA’s strategy and programs, including the ANZCAP recognition program.

‘In this way, we will ensure that the thousands of pharmacy technicians and assistants working across Australia’s public and private hospitals and in all community pharmacy settings are acknowledged and supported to continue the critical role they play in the nation’s pharmacy workforce, to the benefit of the broader care team and Australian patients.’

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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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