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AdPha calls for improved medicine access and patient equity in 2025-26 Budget push

Scope of practice, workforce sustainability and medicines shortages are member priorities in AdPha's pre-budget spotlight.

Advanced Pharmacy Australia (AdPha) is prioritising patient access to life-saving medicines through the establishment of a **dedicated Medicine Shortages and Discontinuation Clinical Advice Service**, national equity for patients' access to medicines through **bilateral Pharmaceutical Reform Agreements (PRAs)** with NSW and ACT, and extending the benefits of expanded pharmacist scope through a **Partnered Pharmacist Medication Prescribing (PPMP)** collaborative care model pilot in Aged Care and General Practice as part of its [2025–26 Federal Pre-Budget Submission](#).

Featuring nine targeted recommendations covering scope of practice, workforce development and sustainability, and medicine access, AdPha has outlined a clear, cost-effective and workable roadmap to improve the efficiency and capacity of Australia's healthcare system.

Highlighting the need to remove barriers to full scope of practice, AdPha is calling on the government to expand the footprint of the proven and successful Partnered Pharmacist Medication Prescribing (PPMP) collaborative care model from hospitals into aged care and general practice settings while also enabling pharmacists to prescribe medicines on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) under PPMP and other collaborative care models.

AdPha President Tom Simpson FANZCAP (Lead&Mgmt) says both initiatives will improve patient outcomes, save costs and optimise the skills of the primary care workforce.

'PPMP improves timeliness, safety and quality of medicines management for patients, while at the same time supporting capacity for doctors and nurses. Pharmacist

prescribing is a natural extension of collaborative care models further facilitating safe and timely access to subsidised medicines.

'With Australia's ageing population and the increasing complexity of chronic disease management, expanding the PPMP model to aged care and general practice can address critical challenges such as medication-related harm, inappropriate polypharmacy, and provider strain.

'And with most patients receiving PBS-funded medicines at discharge from hospital, we cannot let Australia's world-leading Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme be a barrier to safe and timely discharge. Extending PBS prescribing to pharmacists working in formal, credentialled collaborative prescribing arrangements will get more Australians home from hospital quicker and with the medicines they need.

'AdPha has long championed PPMP as a proven model that reduces medication errors and patient length of stay. As it expands beyond hospital walls, its positive impact will only continue to grow.

'This recommendation is the essence of advanced pharmacy – taking the evidence-based approach of hospital pharmacy into all areas where medicines are needed to improve the health outcomes of patients everywhere.'

AdPha is further calling for funding to harness the under-utilised skills of pharmacy technicians as one of several recommendations to build a stronger and more sustainable pharmacy workforce.

'AdPha urges a growth environment for technicians who are integral to interdisciplinary care teams.

'We have recently developed the first Australasian Competency Standards Framework for Technicians working in hospitals and health systems, in order to provide a standardised approach for these crucial health professionals.

'As part of our submission, we are calling on the government to fund technician sector-specific training and resources to ensure this vital area of our workforce is recognised and supported to practice to their full scope, consistently, appropriately and safely.'

With medicines access and shortages being ongoing areas of concern, AdPha is also calling on the government to establish agreements with NSW and the ACT to achieve timely and equitable access to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS), and a Medicine Shortages and Discontinuations Clinical Advice Service to equip healthcare practitioners with real-time updates, expert guidance, and evidence-based solutions.

Mr Simpson says a nationally-consistent approach to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme is long overdue while a medicines shortages service will help reduce unnecessary strain placed on already overstretched emergency services and hospital resources.

'For years now, AdPha has been advocating that the Commonwealth extends the same access to the PBS to patients of hospitals in NSW and the ACT as patients in

every other Australian jurisdiction.

'Until these PRAs are signed, we can never truly achieve equitable health care and patients continue to miss out.

'Medicine shortages and discontinuations are also increasingly disrupting patient care across Australia, with clinicians often left to navigate shortages on their own, leading to inconsistent practices that can compromise the safety and continuity of care.

'A centralised service would provide critical advice on safe and effective alternatives for patients, ensuring continuity of care while building resilience against future supply chain disruptions, and negating the need for hospitals to dedicate fulltime positions to manage medicines shortages.

'Prioritising this initiative will help safeguard the quality of healthcare delivery, reduce distress for both patients and practitioners, and create a more equitable and efficient healthcare system for all Australians.'

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About Advanced Pharmacy Australia:

Formerly trading as the Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia, or SHPA, Advanced Pharmacy Australia (AdPha) is the progressive voice of Australian pharmacists and technicians, built on 80 years of hospital innovation that puts people and patients first. AdPha supports all practitioners across hospitals, transitions of care, aged care and general practice to realise their full potential. We are the peak body committed to forging stronger connections in health care by extending advanced pharmacy expertise from hospitals to everywhere medicines are needed.

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