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Funding models should support patient-centred models of care

Hospital pharmacists say the long-awaited release of the final report of the Health Technology Assessment (HTA) Review is a significant step forward in improving access to critical medicines and health technologies.

Advanced Pharmacy Australia (AdPha) today welcomes the much-anticipated final HTA Review Report acknowledging its key recommendations, notably those which address under-represented patient groups and streamlined pathways for faster access to therapies.

Staunchly supportive of health technology reform, AdPha representatives including President Tom Simpson and Chief Executive Kristin Michaels welcomed the Report at its official launch by Assistant Minister for Health and Aged Care the Hon. Ged Kerney MP at PharmAus24, hosted by Medicines Australia.

Having contributed more than 10 recommendations as part of its two submissions into the review, AdPha supports the Report's key recommendations that focuses on improving process, accountability, and timeliness for highly specialised therapies co-funded by the Australian and state/territory governments.

AdPha President Tom Simpson says this is an area hospital pharmacists have long been advocating for.

'Hospital pharmacists manage nearly a quarter of all PBS medicines expenditure, amounting to over \$3 billion annually in public and private hospitals, reflecting their critical role in patient care and medicine supply.'

'Our members work in some of the most challenging interfaces of patient care and health technology funding; undertaking formulary reviews on new medicines, considering high cost funding approvals for individual patients, or at the bedside helping clinicians and patients to negotiate complex medicines access agreements.'

'They are at the forefront of new medicines as they transition from clinical trials to early access, to early adopter use, and our members see first-hand the need to ensure no patient misses out on life-changing therapies.'

'Current funding pathways create inequities in access, as many hospitals struggle to cover the full cost of therapies, including ancillary services. This leads to a postcode lottery, where patients' access to life-saving treatments depends on their location.'

'Health funding should support patient-centred models of care, prioritising clinical need and patient choice without being constrained by funding rules or care settings.'

'The PBS was a transformative healthcare policy that Australians are rightly proud of. However, there are still many access gaps that remain that prevent patients receiving subsidised medicines where they are receiving care, including hospital settings.'

'These gaps need to be closed to dovetail with HTA reforms to end the postcode lottery. Only then will we tackle inequity in patient access to high-cost and complex medicines, and enable patient-centred and timely provision of treatment when and where patients require them, aligning with Australia's National Medicines Policy (NMP).'

'We echo Assistant Minister Kearney's comments on behalf of Minister Butler, that the next National Health Reform Agreement must live up to its name and truly reform how Australians receive healthcare and access lifesaving, transforming therapies in an equitable and sustainable manner.'

'As the pharmacy organisation with members working in advanced and specialised care, integral to introducing and clinically trialing new and innovative therapies to patients, we look forward to working with the government as they consider these and all recommendations outlined in the report. We also welcome the opportunity to participate in the Government's implementation group to guide HTA reform.'

View [Advanced Pharmacy Australia's submission](#) as part of the first consultation into the HTA Review.

View [Advanced Pharmacy Australia's submission](#) as part of the second consultation into the HTA Review.

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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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