

Media release

Monday 27 May 2019

SHPA congratulates Minister for Health Greg Hunt

The Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia (SHPA) today congratulated The Hon Greg Hunt MP on his re-appointment as Federal Minister for Health and Senator the Hon Richard Colbeck as Minister for Aged Care and Senior Australians in the Second Morrison Ministry, unveiled yesterday.

On behalf of the Board of Directors and members, SHPA Chief Executive Kristin Michaels reaffirmed the organisation's support for a number of Coalition Government healthcare initiatives.

'Commitment to increasing the number of PBS listings, announcement of \$308 million to reduce the expenditure required to utilise the Safety Net for people taking multiple medicines and the implementation of My Health Record will all play a role advancing hospital pharmacy and improving patient care in Australia.'

Ms Michaels also reiterated SHPA's desire to work in close partnership with government and key stakeholders to maximise and strengthen the efficacy and sustainability of the PBS, a pillar of Australia's healthcare system.

'Our members play a key role as custodians of PBS medicines in hospitals and provide medicines management care for patients at high risk of polypharmacy, poor adherence or medicine error – all of which contribute to more than 250,000 medicine-related hospital admissions, which cost Australia's healthcare system \$1.4 billion, annually.

'The standing commitment from the Coalition to declare medication safety a priority is welcome acknowledgment of the criticality of pharmacists' contributions and we look forward to future collaboration in the interest of improving quality use of medicines for all patients, in all settings.'

'We have heard in recent hearings at the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety that many senior Australians are at risk of medication-related harm – a risk compounded by a lack of the necessary clinical pharmacy services in the aged care sector.

'We look forward to working with Senator Colbeck to improve the quality of healthcare in the aged care sector and to deliver on SHPA's recommendations in our forthcoming submission to Royal Commission.

Ms Michaels also congratulated The Hon Ken Wyatt AM MP on his appointment as Minister for Indigenous Australians.

'For people with chronic conditions, unfortunately over-represented in Indigenous communities, access to appropriate medicines in a timely manner is essential.

'SHPA were proud to contribute to the review of Indigenous Pharmacy Programs and advocate for an increase to medicines access for Indigenous people.

'We are currently in the process of adding an Aboriginal Health stream to our Specialty Practice program, which will help our members build networks and receive peer support and access experts working in the area, with the ultimate aim of improving the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.'

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For more information contact:

Nick Sharp-Paul, Head of Strategy and Communication
nsharp-paul@shpa.org.au | 0411 098 838

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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