

Media release

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SHPA welcomes ongoing support for medicines safety innovation in Tasmanian Budget

The Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia (SHPA) has welcomed \$12.1 billion in extended support for Tasmania's health and hospital system, with visionary investment in the innovative hospital pharmacy sector a win for patient safety in the state's 2023-24 Budget.

Released yesterday by Tasmanian Premier The Hon. Jeremy Rockliff MP, the [2023-24 Tasmanian Budget](#) includes \$374 million toward hospital beds across the state, \$20 million to reduce outpatient wait times, \$580 million to continue the 10-year Launceston General Hospital redevelopment, \$170.4 million to progress the 30-year Royal Hobart Hospital master plan and \$87.1 million for the North West Regional Hospital's master plan.

Importantly, the budget saw an additional \$16 million announced toward the redevelopment of the Pharmacy Department at the State's flagship hospital, the Royal Hobart Hospital, addressing one of the key recommendations in [SHPA's 2023-24 Tasmanian State Budget submission](#). The new \$21.8m Pharmacy Department will deliver a state-of-the-art chemotherapy production centre, alongside new facilities for medication storage, dispensing and staff development.

SHPA President Tom Simpson says the funding announcement is one of the most significant funding investments in public hospital pharmacy in a generation.

'This visionary investment will ensure Tasmanians have reliable access to cutting-edge cancer medicines that can only be prepared in a contemporary chemotherapy production centre. As an island state, Tasmania is particularly dependent on world-class local pharmacy services, ensuring Tasmanians do not face any delays or hurdles accessing modern chemotherapy medicines.'

'In addition, the redeveloped Royal Hobart Hospital pharmacy will create the capacity needed for the hospital to continue to expand its services to all Tasmanians.'

Mr Simpson also welcomed \$50 million toward a Digital Health Transformation Program and \$41 million toward Virtual Care Programs and COVID@homeplus, which will help reduce unnecessary trips to hospital and safely support earlier discharge from hospital to free up acute care beds to meet growing demand.

'The Tasmanian Government is justly proud of the COVID@homeplus program which saw Tasmanians have the lowest rates of hospitalisation due to COVID-19 during the height of the pandemic. The integration of hospital pharmacy services into the COVID@homeplus program drove increased uptake of COVID-19 antivirals for the most vulnerable patients, and ensured Tasmanians being treated at home continued to receive high-quality medicines management, benefits this Budget will help take forward.'

Mr Simpson says the budget provides funding for a wide range of service expansions and improvements that support innovative models of care that put the patient at the centre.

'The funding to open more hospital beds, and keep funded beds open, will enable care teams to maximise the benefits of the already announced Bedside Medication Management program, that will see a Hospital Pharmacy Technician on every ward of all acute hospitals in the state.

'This supports care teams to improve timeliness of medication treatments, reduce medication waste and decrease non-nursing and midwifery tasks, freeing up more time for direct patient care.

'The impacts of this budget will support Tasmania's adoption of Partnered Pharmacist Medication Charting (PPMC). The [growing evidence base](#) shows partnership between pharmacists and clinicians at the leading edge of practice can reduce delays to critical treatment and reduce medication errors, while improving the efficiency of the health system.

'Since 2014 the public and private hospital pharmacy workforce has almost doubled; supporting hospital pharmacy roles is key to realising the benefits of the collaborative PPMC model, which has also been shown to increase the job satisfaction not just of pharmacists, but of medical staff too.

'We thank the Tasmanian Government for its ongoing commitment to growing our profession and supporting the best practice pharmacy care of Tasmanians.'

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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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