

Media release

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First pharmacy practice standard for women's and newborn health now available

Australia's first [Standard of practice in women's and newborn health for pharmacy services](#) has been released by the Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia (SHPA) and is now available in the *Journal of Pharmacy Practice and Research (JPPR)*, Australia's leading scientific pharmacy journal, via Early View.

Lead author James Dwyer FANZCAP (Lead&Mgmt, MedSafety), Chair of SHPA's Women's and Newborn Health Standard of Practice Working Group and SHPA's Women's and Newborn Health Leadership Committee, says the Standard covers key conditions impacting women and neonates, including neonatal intensive care, endometriosis, perimenopause and menopause as well as other contemporary topics including gender dysphoria and transition, and access to reproductive medicine.

'Women's health focuses on many health issues and conditions that are unique to women or affect women differently than men.

'And pharmacists play an important role advocating for women's health and person- and family-centred care while providing expert medicines advice and support across the reproductive life course, from menarche to menopause and beyond.

'Many women, especially culturally and linguistically diverse young women, face barriers accessing sexual and reproductive health information and care. We need to better equip the entire healthcare workforce, including pharmacists, to support all women requiring care.

'The [National Women's Health Strategy 2020-2030](#) identified five priority areas to improve health outcomes for women and girls in Australia: maternal, sexual and reproductive health; healthy ageing; chronic conditions and preventative health; mental health; and health impacts of violence against women and girls.

'This Standard supports this strategy and meets the objective of the women's and newborn health pharmacy service. In consultation with the interdisciplinary and interprofessional team, women's and newborn health pharmacists optimise medication management in collaboration with patients and carers.'

SHPA President Tom Simpson FANZCAP (Lead&Mgmt) says the release of the Standard is timely in light of the recent Senate Inquiry into menopause and perimenopause where SHPA representative and co-author of this Standard Dr Treasure McGuire FANZCAP (Edu., ObsGyne) and SHPA Head of Policy Jerry Yik FANZCAP (Lead&Mgmt, PublicHlth) [provided evidence](#) on behalf of its members.

'SHPA has strongly advocated for a comprehensive approach to manage perimenopausal and menopausal symptoms, focusing on awareness, education and access to evidence-based treatments.

'We have called for ongoing and urgent research into perimenopause to understand the impact on health outcomes and quality of life and we thank our members for their invaluable insight to this cause.

'I would especially like to acknowledge the team that produced this Standard, expertly led by James Dwyer, which has ensured the publication of a comprehensive and robust Standard that covers the wide-ranging expertise of Women's and Newborn Health Pharmacists.

'I also extend thanks to the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RANZCOG) and Australasian Diabetes in Pregnancy Society (ADIPS) for their review of this Standard.

'Women's and Newborn Health Pharmacists are medicines experts in areas ranging from reproductive medicine, pregnancy, labour and delivery, lactation and neonatology, gender dysphoria/transition, through to gynaecology, perimenopause, menopause and beyond.

'SHPA is proud to support this important area of healthcare and advocate strongly to ensure the health needs of women are met safely, appropriately and efficiently.'

The *Standard of practice in women's and newborn health for pharmacy services* is now available in Early View and will feature in the August issue of *JPPR* which is [free – as always – for SHPA members](#). SHPA's response to the Inquiry into the issues related to menopause and perimenopause can be found on the [SHPA website here](#).

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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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