

Media release

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SHPA celebrates excellence amid a ‘transformative’ year as the sun sets on MM2023

As the curtain closed on Australia’s largest scientific pharmacy conference, the Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia (SHPA) reflected on a year of achievements and new initiatives and celebrated leading members through the Members’ Awards and Resident of the Year final.

Closing the first day of Medicines Management 2023, the 47th SHPA National Conference (MM2023) on Friday, the 2023 SHPA Annual General Meeting saw SHPA President Tom Simpson release the 2023 SHPA Annual Report, noting broad progress and successful new initiatives under the [Transformation 2024](#) agenda, led by the founding of the Australian and New Zealand College of Advanced Pharmacy (ANZCAP), investment in specialty pharmacy and a renewed focus on inclusivity.

‘There were many metrics of success in a busy year: SHPA CPD saw a 14% jump in attendance, a record 68% of members are enrolled in at least one Specialty Practice Group; the [Journal of Pharmacy Practice and Research](#) attained an inaugural Impact Factor of 2.1, we released our biggest ever [Australian Injectable Drugs Handbook](#) and [Pharmacy Forecast Australia 2023](#) saw audiences from Australian Parliament House to the 81st FIP Congress on World Pharmacists Day.

‘We saw many advances through advocacy, from Queensland’s pharmacist-led prescribing pilot to in-principle support to increase hospital pharmacist numbers in NSW emergency departments and progress toward Pharmaceutical Reform Agreements in NSW and ACT, against the backdrop of productive ongoing discussions toward the 8CPA.’

- View [2023 SHPA Annual Report](#)

The 2023 SHPA AGM saw Emily Diprose (ACT) and John Evans (Vic) joining the Board of Directors, Dr Kate O’Hara elected in NSW following her relocation from ACT, Dr Jacinta Johnson returned for another term in SA/NT, Lindsay Cane reappointed as an Independent Director and Katie McDermott confirmed as an incoming Independent Director following the retirement of David Butt. Mr Simpson praised the departing directors for their steadfast contributions through a time of change.

‘Olivia Rofe (Vic) spent four years on the Board and Dr Lisa Pont (NSW) eight years, and I thank them for the service to SHPA as elected Board Directors. Their tenures have spanned a crucial period in SHPA’s history and they have contributed directly to fostering the achievements we acknowledge at this meeting and celebrate at this conference.’

On Saturday the celebrations continued as with the announcement of the 2023 SHPA Members’ Awards, determined by national member vote across three categories of 2023 SHPA Branch Award recipients.

The **2023 SHPA Early Career Pharmacist of the Year** is **Ashleigh Lawrence (WA)**, honoured for being a driver of innovation and source of inspiration and mentorship for other early career pharmacists.

A Senior Pharmacist at Fiona Stanly Hospital in WA, Ashleigh is a key driver in improving and modernising medicines Management and Patient Care across both public and private hospital settings.

The **2023 SHPA Technician of the Year** is **Tara Clayson-Fisher (Tas)**, who as well as recently being appointed the [first Technician Observer to the SHPA Board of Directors](#) and first Technician to be inducted as an SHPA Fellow, was honoured for her national leadership in driving policy and practice input to help open the doors for pharmacy technician careers.

The **VAD Pharmacy Project Team** also took out the **2023 SHPA Hospital Team of the Year** honour, for forging a safe and successful pathway for the operation of Voluntary Assisted Dying in the state of Tasmania.

The dancefloor came alive at the closing ‘PharmFest’ Gala, which saw the announcement of Emma Dall’Alba (Qld) as the **2023 SHPA Resident of the Year**. Emma, who is Senior Pharmacist – Townsville Rehabilitation Unit at Townsville University Hospital, took out the highly competitive final with her presentation ‘Assessing the health literacy of patients prescribed SGLT2 Inhibitors, and impacts on the health service’. Emma steps into the shoes of Rhiannon Froude (Vic) and will be SHPA’s Residency Ambassador for 2024.

Mr Simpson says the atmosphere from MM2023 was electrifying.

‘Medicines Management is so much more than a conference, it truly provides connection and inspiration that lasts for a year. Thank you to our amazing Scientific Program Committee for their hard work and dedication.

‘We can’t wait to harness this energy and continue to lead pharmacy forward, fostering innovation at the frontiers of practice to the benefit of all practitioners and the patients in their care.’

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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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