

# Media release

Thursday 30 March 2023

## SHPA welcomes coast-to-coast real-time prescription monitoring as ScriptCheckWA goes live

Western Australia has become the latest jurisdiction to launch real time prescription monitoring, a powerful clinical tool in the effort to curb the unsafe use of high-risk medicines such as opioids, in an announcement welcomed by the Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia (SHPA) today.

Building on the state's existing prescription monitoring program, [ScriptCheckWA](#) provides accessible and up-to-date information for doctors and pharmacists regarding high-risk medicines, informing decisions on reducing or deprescribing to mitigate dependency and harm.

SHPA Chief Executive Kristin Michaels says real-time prescription monitoring is an important collaborative tool enabling interdisciplinary care teams to work together and ensure Western Australians are using medicines safely and effectively.

'We have many gaps to fill to uphold the optimal use of medicines in Australia, with 250,000 hospital admissions each year due to medicines-related harm, with many of these being preventable. Opioids account for more drug-related deaths in Australia than any other category.

'The use of robust data from real-time prescription monitoring systems will enable care teams in WA, in and beyond hospitals, to minimise the use of unnecessarily high doses and polypharmacy, monitor the safety and efficacy of prescribed doses, and place patient safety above all else.

'The initiative aligns with the third recommendation from SHPA's landmark multi-stakeholder ['Reducing Opioid-related Harm'](#) report (2018), which called for the widespread use of real-time prescription monitoring systems for opioids to optimise patient safety and inform prescribing and dispensing in hospitals, which is where many opioid dependencies begin.'

Ms Michaels says the new tool brings WA into line with other states and territories, enabling team-based intervention before dangerous medicine misuse or overdose occurs.

'While Tasmania introduced real-time prescription monitoring back in 2009, the last four years has seen the introduction of SafeScript (Victoria), ScriptCheckSA, QScript (Queensland), Canberra Script (ACT), NTScript (Northern Territory) and SafeScript NSW.

'With the launch of ScriptCheckWA, we're very pleased to see real-time prescription monitoring in place across the country, but data is only half of the solution.

'We need more expert pharmacists in more care settings, ensuring the most vulnerable in our community are empowered in their medicine use and protected from preventable harm.

'As the walls of clinical care continue to fall, SHPA will continue to advocate for RTPM, Partnered Pharmacist Medication Charting (PPMC) other team-based initiatives and investment into specialty and

outreach pharmacist roles, so that hospital-informed pharmacist expertise has a positive impact on more people in more places.'

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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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