

Media release

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Celebrating hospital pharmacy technicians, stepping up at the core of the roll-out

The Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia (SHPA) is celebrating the crucial role of hospital pharmacy technicians and pharmacy assistants, reflecting on 20 months that have seen the profession step up like never before to help power Australia's COVID-19 response and vaccine roll-out.

Ahead of National Pharmacy Technician Day on Tuesday 19 October, SHPA Chief Executive Kristin Michaels says the profession has never been more valuable to the safety and wellbeing of Australians.

'Hospital pharmacy technicians and assistants are integral members of care teams around the country, employed in 95% of Australian hospitals and are a crucial component of the mammoth COVID-19 vaccination roll-out.

'While their roles and responsibilities vary from hospital to hospital and state to state, the focus is the same: delivering precise technical services as an essential part of hospital pharmacy departments focused on patient care.'

The value of hospital pharmacy technicians in the vaccine roll-out was recently highlighted in SHPA's *Pharmacy GRIT*, from [developing procedures and delivering training](#) to safeguarding the preparation of vaccine doses by pharmacists and technicians in New South Wales' first large scale state-run hub, authored by SHPA Technicians and Assistants Chair Mark Clifford, to the [set-up of South Australia's first mass vaccination clinic](#) through the Central Adelaide Local Health Network, authored by former (2020) Chair Tara Clayson-Fisher.

Mr Clifford says this year's theme 'soar to new heights' befits the recent challenges and triumphs of the profession, as has been seen in many Australian healthcare disciplines.

'Across urban, rural and remote areas, technicians were seconded or performed "double-duties" to support the rollout, which saw an increase in the number of new technicians specifically employed to prepare vaccines in dedicated hubs and clinics.

'At the same time, hospital pharmacy technicians "back-at-base" kept everything else running – no small feat given capacity challenges in many centres due to local outbreaks and community transmission.

'On behalf of the profession we thank each and every technician who stepped up this year, we're able to move into the next phase of the pandemic through your efforts.'

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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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