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Hospital pharmacists welcome local boost to IV fluid supply

AdPha welcomes manufacturing investment as safeguard against key medicine shortage.

Advanced Pharmacy Australia (AdPha) has welcomed new investment into local IV fluid production, announced today by Health Minister Mark Butler, as an essential safeguard against crippling shortages that will support patient care in hospitals across Australia.

Australian manufacturing capacity is projected to expand by one third to 80 million units a year from 2027 under the \$20 million plan to expand Baxter Healthcare's production facility in Western Sydney.

Tom Simpson FANZCAP (Lead&Mgmt) says IV fluids are used every day by a number of specialty practitioners embedded in care teams, in and around Australian hospitals.

'IV fluids are essential to acute pharmacy care to administer life-saving medicines, and are utilised every day by specialty pharmacists across Compounding Services, Critical Care, Emergency Medicine, Haematology and Oncology and Infectious Diseases, just to name a few.'

'Our members working in Dispensing and Distribution have spent the last few years managing medicine shortages and in recent months, the IV fluid shortages for their hospital and health services, having to make tough decisions on how to conserve stock to maintain safe and quality care for all patients.'

'Thank you to all AdPha members across our various Specialty Practice Groups who have spoken up on this issue, including through our important COVID-19 Hospital Pharmacy Capacity Snapshot Series, which uncovered weaknesses in medicines procurement nationally and a lack of corresponding defensive strategies.'

'This investment to shore up supply of essential IV fluids is an important step forward in the coordinated and interdisciplinary effort to mitigate medicines shortages, a top priority of AdPha's advocacy.'

AdPha is the only pharmacy body represented on the [National IV Fluid Response Group](#), represented by Patrick Lam FANZCAP (Lead&Mgmt, MedSupply), Chair of the AdPha Dispensing and Distribution Leadership Committee.

Mr Simpson says building supply chain resilience is key to ensuring the quality of healthcare delivery and reducing distress for both patients and practitioners.

'We are pleased to see domestic manufacturing in Australia being supported for critical healthcare services, but there is more to do.'

'Regulators, the pharmaceutical industry, health departments, health services, and clinicians, in partnership with consumers, need to work together to ensure medicine shortages are managed well and communicated clearly to patients.'

'AdPha will continue to advocate for a national Medicine Shortages and Discontinuations Clinical Advice Service to ensure continuity of care while building resilience against future supply chain disruptions, and negating the need for hospitals to dedicate fulltime positions to manage medicines shortages.'

See also: Mr Simpson and Jerry Yik FANZCAP (Lead&Mgmt, PublicHlth) discuss how to identify, communicate and manage shortages using available resources in a recent [article](#) and [podcast episode](#) for Australian Prescriber.

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About Advanced Pharmacy Australia:

Advanced Pharmacy Australia (AdPha) is the progressive voice of Australian pharmacists and technicians, built on more than 80 years of hospital innovation that puts the patient at the centre of everything we do. AdPha supports all pharmacy practitioners, working with interdisciplinary teams across hospitals and health services, to realise their full potential. We are the peak body committed to forging stronger connections in health care by extending advanced pharmacy expertise from hospitals to everywhere medicines are needed.

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