

Media release

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Hospital pharmacy funding cut a disappointing reality for patient care

This week's confirmation of \$44m in cuts to hospital pharmacy department budgets will have unforeseen impacts on the care of some of Australia's most acutely unwell patients, the Society of Hospitals Pharmacists of Australia (SHPA) warned today.

On Saturday, the Budget measure that will see a [revision to public and private hospital pharmacy pricing on 1 October 2019](#), resulting in a reduction of revenue associated with S85 medicine dispensing, was executed.

SHPA Chief Executive Kristin Michaels says the pricing change has been confirmed for both public and private hospitals as originally outlined in the 2019 Federal Budget.

'On behalf of our members with whom we advocated against this change, SHPA is disappointed to see this cut in funding to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) – through a reduction in funds being paid to hospitals – will now become a reality.

'In our liaison with the major parties before the Federal Election and with the re-elected Morrison Coalition Government since, we have outlined a number of [crucial aspects of patient care and hospital pharmacy services that will be negatively impacted](#) by this decision, and our focus now shifts to supporting our members and the broader sector through these changes.'

Ms Michaels says it is too early to assess the full impact of the Budget cut on Australian hospitals.

'Our members have made clear there will be staffing, budgetary and operational changes required in hospital pharmacy departments when this cut is implemented and we will be working with them as much as possible to ensure minimal impact on the crucial care hospital pharmacists provide to Australian patients.'

Underlining the organisation's focus on appropriate medicines funding as a backbone of hospital pharmacy services, the *PBS Medicines in Hospitals* program will be central to discussions at SHPA's upcoming Medicines Leadership Forum in August.

Ms Michaels says work will continue toward a rebalanced funding arrangement that allows for the delivery of optimal hospital pharmacy services in Australia.

'We believe there is a very strong rationale to see the Budget cut partially or fully mitigated through changes to hospital funding in the National Health Reform Agreement 2020-25.

'Ultimately, our members are essential to the process and we thank those who have already raised their voices – advocating on behalf of hospital pharmacy is central to who we are and SHPA will continue to showcase the critical work you do.'

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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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