

# Media release

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## SHPA welcomes medicines supply and hospital commitments in landmark 2020 Budget

The Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia (SHPA) has welcomed new funding for the national COVID-19 response, including a \$3.3bn boost to the National Medical Stockpile and strong support for Australian hospitals, as well as funding commitments to deliver the National Antimicrobial Resistance Strategy, medical research and improvements to Australia's medicines supply chain, as the Federal Government delivered its landmark 2020-21 Federal Budget tonight.

In a Budget defined by once-in-a-generation forecast deficits, resulting from emergency government action to mitigate the economic, social and health impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in Australia, SHPA also welcomed announced or previewed measures including a \$2bn aged care package to improve the health and wellbeing of older Australians, record investment in Australia's public hospitals through the \$133bn five-year National Health Reform Agreement, and a \$2.3bn COVID-19 vaccine package, including \$1.7bn for anticipated production and supply by CSL next year.

SHPA Chief Executive Kristin Michaels says COVID-19 has reaffirmed the priority of ensuring Australia's hospitals are equipped for any contingency.

'Hospital pharmacists are crucial members of care teams ensuring as few Australians as possible experience the worst symptoms of COVID-19, and SHPA welcomes the strong commitment to supporting and resourcing our hospitals and health workforce as the pandemic continues, including \$3.3bn for the National Medical Stockpile to secure access to medical equipment, medicines and personal protective equipment (PPE).

'These resources extend beyond our shores and, with around 90% of the medicines used to treat Australian patients manufactured overseas, we welcome the inclusion of pharmaceuticals in the \$1.3bn Modern Manufacturing Initiative and National Manufacturing Priorities. On behalf of our members we look forward to contributing to the [\\$107.2m Supply Chain Resilience Initiative](#), given Australia's vulnerable position accounting for less than 2% of the global medicines market.'

Ms Michaels says the Federal Government's investments in pharmacy research and antimicrobial resistance was also notable.

'While the COVID-19 pandemic currently casts a long shadow, hospital pharmacists continue to raise the alarm regarding the risks of antimicrobial resistance developing and spreading further. Preserving the continued availability of effective antimicrobials is important for Australia's hospitals and healthcare system and we welcome \$22.5m over four years to deliver Australia's *National Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) Strategy – 2020 & Beyond*.

'We also applaud the establishment of the \$25m Quality, Safety and Effectiveness of Medicine Use and Medicine Intervention by Pharmacists initiative, through the Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF), in

response to Quality Use of Medicine and Medicine Safety recently being declared the Tenth National Health Priority Area. Hospital pharmacists are leaders in pharmacy research and innovation, and SHPA members are ideally positioned to utilise these new opportunities to improve the quality and safety of patient care.’

The 2020-21 Federal Budget also included [\\$376m over four years for new PBS listings](#) for cutting-edge treatments including olaparib (certain newly diagnosed advanced ovarian cancers), entrectinib (non-small cell lung cancer), acalabrutinib (certain lymphomas and leukaemias) and combination atezolizumab and bevacizumab (certain inoperable liver cancers).

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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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