

Media release

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SHPA reflects on member-driven progress in National Reconciliation Week

The Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia (SHPA) marks [National Reconciliation Week 2020](#) by reflecting on the achievements of our volunteer members; over the past 12 months SHPA members have driven the development of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Specialty Practice stream demonstrating a commitment to raising the awareness of health issues affecting Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities within the hospital pharmacy profession.

Information gathered through SHPA's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Specialty Practice stream has been used to develop a national research publication, organise local cultural tours, initiate the development of practical guidance to diversify research case studies, and provide clear guidance to SHPA and members on approaches to closing the gap in health outcomes.

Leadership Committee Chair, Yugambeh Pharmacist Aleena Williams says the stream has achieved a lot in their first year, with active member discussions on a range of topics challenging the assumptions of the stream members and Leadership Committee alike.

'Since submitting our application for the specialty practice stream one year ago, we've worked with SHPA to form a Leadership Committee, tackle difficult conversations as a group and work together to plan relevant CPD for the profession.

'More recently, issues discussed by stream participants led to an editorial on rheumatic disease published in the April 2020 issue of SHPA's flagship journal, the [Journal of Pharmacy Practice and Research](#) (JPPR), highlighting the guidelines for the prevention, diagnosis and management of acute rheumatic fever and heart disease – an excellent opportunity for hospital pharmacists nationwide to take steps towards closing the health gap associated with these conditions.'

SHPA Chief Executive Kristin Michaels says the organisation is proud to support the rapidly developing work of one of its newest Specialty Practice streams.

'While Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people comprise around three per cent of the Australian population, they remain overrepresented in hospital admissions.

'Proactively including more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander case studies as part of health research projects can benefit both this community and individual practitioners, and we look forward to announcing an upcoming webinar offering practical guidance on how hospital pharmacists can achieve better representation in their health research.

'In this time of reflection and on behalf of all SHPA members and our Board of Directors, I thank the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health stream's inaugural Leadership Committee – Aleena Williams, Melissa Antonel, Alice Gilbert, Chastina Heck, Nicola Maddern, Susan Welch and Bing Yong – as well as all contributors to the Practice and Interest groups.'

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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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