

Media release

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SHPA congratulates NSW Labor on election win

The Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia (SHPA) today congratulates NSW Labor on winning Saturday's 2023 State Election, at a pivotal time to build the specialised hospital pharmacy workforce in Australia's most populous state.

Chief Executive Kristin Michaels says SHPA welcomes the Labor Party's commitments and looks forward to hospital pharmacist-specific investments to reduce long-standing inequities in patient care and access to medicines expertise, at a time of significant strain on the state's hospital workforce.

'SHPA congratulates Premier-elect Chris Minns and we look forward to working with the new government to ensure safer and better quality hospital care, building on our [evidence to recent parliamentary enquiries](#) that clearly charts a path through which more hospital pharmacists and technicians will improve patient safety and care outcomes.

'With a "fresh start" promised to the state, the new NSW Labor government now has the opportunity to respond to [the report into the Ramping Inquiry](#), which recommended a boost to the NSW hospital pharmacy workforce and to establish a Pharmaceutical Reform Agreement (PRA).

'We look forward to these recommendations being implemented. With GP wait times exceeding a week in many parts of NSW, it is time to establish a PRA with the Commonwealth to reduce longstanding inequities in access to Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) medicines for public hospital patients in NSW, who currently may receive as little as three days' worth of medicines upon discharge.

'Hospital pharmacy has long been under-resourced in NSW and we reiterate our support for SHPA's \$268 million *Hospital Pharmacy Workforce Sustainability in NSW Public Hospitals* proposal, which will fund over 600 positions in the pharmacy workforce each year. This will aid in expanding the scope of pharmacist practice in Emergency Departments to ease bed block and support patient flow.'

Ms Michaels says a key election pledge to fund NSW's future healthcare workforce must include pharmacist positions to maximise the impact of the investment.

'It is important that NSW Labor's five-year bonded HECS scholarships for NSW Health employees incorporates hospital pharmacy.

'SHPA is already positioned to support this coverage, with years one to three of the positions directly aligning with pharmacy internship and [SHPA's Foundation Residencies](#), which provide the strongest possible start for pharmacists on their path to specialisation and expert, team-based care. It is also a key recruitment and retention strategy for many hospitals.

'Across Australia, over 700 pharmacists have completed or are completing SHPA Residencies; just under 50 of these are from NSW.

'We look forward to a strong relationship with the Minns Labor Government and continuing our positive engagement with Ryan Park MP, to ensure that we work together to ensure the maximum positive

impact on our healthcare workers, hospital infrastructure and the health and wellbeing of people across NSW.'

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For more information contact:

Nick Sharp-Paul, Chief Operating Officer
nsharp-paul@shpa.org.au | 0411 098 838

About SHPA

The Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia (SHPA) is the national, professional organisation for the 6,100+ Hospital Pharmacists, and their Hospital Pharmacist Intern and Hospital Pharmacy Technician colleagues 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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