

Media release

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SHPA lifts up member voices and embraces equity on International Women's Day

The Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia (SHPA) is embracing equity on International Women's Day (IWD) 2023 and beyond, lifting up the experiences of members who continue to dominate leadership positions in the organisation and advocating for flexible, specialised pharmacy career pathways.

SHPA Vice President Dr Kate O'Hara says career disruption remains the key issue for women in hospital pharmacy, and across health care.

'Pharmacy is a fantastic career that supports women at different stages of their lives, but this is contingent on truly embedded cultures of flexibility in the workplace.

'In my career, I have had access to flexible work around my research, as well as being a mum. As specialised pharmacy roles expand, such as in aged care and GP clinics, there will be more opportunities for better work life balance for more women in pharmacy.

'SHPA will continue to advocate for a spectrum of possible pathways, such as those offered through our leading Foundation and Advanced Training Residencies, to ensure there continue to be many, varied ways for women to excel in hospital pharmacy, along with supporting pharmacists and technicians in new patient care roles outside traditional practice settings.

'I encourage more young women to consider entering pharmacy and make the most of these evolving opportunities.'

Over the month of March, SHPA is celebrating the experiences and innovations of members through:

- today's ['IWD 2023 – Embracing Equity in Pharmacy' webinar](#), free for SHPA members;
- the [IWD Member Profile series](#), a weekly platform for unique stories about gender and equity in the workplace;
- ['This International Women's Day instead of having it all, it's time to share it all'](#), a feature article by Kate Woods on existing opportunities to use COVID-19 flexibility to improve gender equity and a compelling call for a sector wide gender-pay-gap audit.

In her virtual opening of today's webinar, Emma McBride MP, Assistant Minister for Mental Health and Suicide Prevention and Assistant Minister for Rural and Regional Health encouraged female early career pharmacists to consider how they can contribute.

'Pharmacists have all the qualities to be in leadership and decision-making roles, whether that's within your team, within your hospital, or within your local health district.

'Today my call to all pharmacists, particularly to women in pharmacy and early career women in pharmacy, is find your voice. You have your platform, and we need you to see the change that we all want to realise in health across Australia.'

Chief Executive Kristin Michaels says SHPA's IWD initiatives provide a meaningful opportunity for the SHPA community to come together and embrace equity.

'Equity is a cornerstone value of SHPA and we're proud to showcase stories of our members, for our members this month.

'More than 60% of our 2023 Leadership Committees and Branches are led by women, a figure that has remained consistently strong over the years.

'Beyond leadership statistics, every day we are all encouraged and inspired by amazing women in a broad range of specialised roles, innovating at the edge of practice and creating new and diverse career pathways for our next generation of leading, female pharmacists.'

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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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