

# Media release

Monday 25 March 2019

## Toward improved care through collaboration in NSW

The Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia (SHPA) today congratulated the NSW Liberal-National Coalition following the re-election of Gladys Berejiklian as Premier of New South Wales and reaffirmed its commitment to partnering with government and healthcare stakeholders to improve medicines management and patient care in Australia's most populous state.

On behalf of members and the SHPA NSW Branch, Chief Executive Kristin Michaels says SHPA looks forward to working with the Minister for Health and the NSW Department of Health in [supporting hospital pharmacist-led initiatives](#) to improve patient care and reduce medicine-related incidents.

'The misuse of pharmaceutical opioids continues to cause harm in NSW with a rate of 2.1 deaths due to pharmaceutical opioids per 100,000 people, the third highest proportion in Australia.

'We encourage the NSW Government to invest in opioid stewardship services as detailed in the 33 recommendations of our ['Reducing Opioid-related Harm'](#) report.

'This will lead to a specific examination of post-surgical prescribing in hospitals, which is a vital part of intervention. Hospital pharmacists remain able to encourage the appropriate use of opioids by patients to minimise the risk of opioid abuse, addiction and diversion.

'By partnering with SHPA and other agencies, the NSW government can develop clinical tools and resources to support pharmacists and the public in this effort.'

Ms Michaels reiterated the need for investment in hospital pharmacist positions.

'SHPA will continue to advocate for greater investment in hospital pharmacy and extended weekend and after-hours pharmacy services, bringing NSW in line with other states and territories and helping NSW hospitals reduce the 28,000 medication-related incidents that occur in the state each year.

'NSW's hospital pharmacist to hospital bed ratio is currently the lowest in the country. A refreshed government should take the opportunity offered by the NSW people to revisit the funding provided to sufficiently support the quality and levels of medicines expertise provided in NSW hospitals.'

Ms Michaels also welcomes the NSW Government's investment into hospital services, which includes Stage 2 of the Blacktown and Mount Druitt hospitals expansion project.

'We hope an increase in hospital pharmacists accompanies this investment.'

View SHPA's [2019 NSW State Election Priorities](#).

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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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