

Media release

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Vaccine pace escalates: State and territory clinics roll out another million doses in only 17 days

The Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia (SHPA) strongly supports Australia's federal, state and territory health ministers' view of vaccination as the 'way out' of the COVID-19 pandemic and welcomes the rapid escalation in vaccine uptake across the country, led by large-scale clinics.

Australia's state and territory run vaccine clinics have administered another million COVID-19 vaccine doses in the past 17 days – the fastest yet seen – bringing their total to just over 3 million doses. This contributes significantly to the total of 7.37 million doses administered across all federal and jurisdictional vaccination sites since the nationwide vaccine rollout commenced in February.

SHPA Chief Executive Kristin Michaels says that as several states and territories re-enter lockdowns to limit the community transmission of the highly transmissible Delta strain, SHPA supports the escalation of Australia's vaccine rollout strategy, as key milestones were crossed in Australia's two most populous states.

'During the past weekend, New South Wales crossed the two million vaccine dose mark, with 780,000 of those administered by NSW state-run clinics. Victoria, following its fourth lockdown since March 2020, has also seen over two million vaccine doses administered, one million of which have been undertaken by state-run clinics.'

Ms Michaels says that as Australia's COVID-19 vaccine rollout continues to grow, hospital pharmacists and technicians continue to play a crucial role in the largest public health initiative in Australia's history.

'We continue to proudly support our members and their peers, working in the only pharmacy sector meaningfully engaged in the COVID-19 vaccine program on a national scale.'

'As stewards of the multiple vaccine candidates, hospital pharmacists continue to remain incredibly responsive to changing vaccine advice, which now includes winding back AstraZeneca supply to by-request only by October 2021.'

'Hospital pharmacists are uniquely equipped to handle more than one vaccine candidate simultaneously, crucial expertise given the Federal Government's [recently announced](#) deal with Moderna which will bring a third vaccine candidate into the market following last week's [provisional approval](#) granted by the Therapeutic Goods Administration.'

'As with the Pfizer vaccine's ultra-low temperature storage, supply and distribution – managed by hospital pharmacists since Phase 1a of the vaccine roll-out – Moderna is a two-dose mRNA vaccine requiring extreme cold chain storage, which will again draw on hospital pharmacists' unparalleled, specialised medication management know-how.'

Amid COVID-19 vaccination program strategy changes overnight, Prime Minister Scott Morrison announced mandatory vaccination for quarantine workers and aged care workers and advised the AstraZeneca vaccine would be made available to all adults under 60 years of age from their General Practitioner.

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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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