



SHPA response to a petition for the Board of Pharmacy Specialties (BPS) in the United States to recognise Pain Management as a Pharmacy Specialty Certification

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.

SHPA convenes a Pain Management Speciality Practice Group, comprising a network of over 800 members who provide clinical pharmacy services to patients experiencing acute or persistent pain in a range of settings: acute surgical or critical care units, persistent pain clinics and other inpatient, outpatient, ambulatory or primary care settings. Some are also engaged in multidisciplinary pain services and analgesic stewardship services. SHPA's Pain Management Leadership Committee developed the *Standard of practice in pain management for pharmacy services*¹ describing best practice and outlining the essential and desirable knowledge, credentialing, skills and experiential learning for pain management pharmacists.

SHPA supports members in their career progression and provides accredited pathways for specialty development through our [Foundation Residencies and Advanced Training Residencies \(ATRs\)](#). These are national, formal, accredited and structured experiential learning program for pharmacists, consolidating initial education and training while progressing the early career practitioner towards advanced practice and specialisation. SHPA offers a suite of ATRs across several areas of practice, including Emergency Medicine, and Surgery and Perioperative Medicine, and are in the process of developing further pathways, including in Pain Management. Pharmacists who complete the ATR program should be recognised on the register as leaders in their relevant fields.

SHPA has long been a strong advocate for recognition of the specialist skills and knowledge hospital pharmacists possess. SHPA has called for the public register of pharmacists to display a pharmacist's completion of credentialing and/or micro-credentialing in an area of practice or recognise Advanced Practice pharmacists to support patient and prescriber choice, and recruitment of pharmacists who are assessed to be competent and have the requisite skills to practice in a particular discipline.

SHPA is therefore in support of the petition to recognise Pain Management as a Pharmacy Specialty Certification.

SHPA members have noted that the course provided by the Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists Faculty of Pain Medicine² to doctors training to be Pain Management Specialists may be a helpful resource for creating a specialisation course for pharmacists.

SHPA looks forward to hearing the outcome of the petition in due course. If you have any queries or would like to discuss our submission further, please do not hesitate to contact Marina Hanna, Policy Lead at mhanna@shpa.org.au.

References

¹ Lim D, Hall A, Jordan M, Suckling B, Tuffin PH, Tynan K, Warrior N, Munro C. Standard of practice in pain management for pharmacy services. *J Pharm Pract Res* 2019; 49: 270-84. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jppr.1550>

² Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists. Faculty of Pain Medicine training course. Available at: <https://www.anzca.edu.au/education-training/pain-medicine-training-program>

