

# Media release

Wednesday 26 February 2020

## Harness the breadth of pharmacist expertise to reduce medicines-related harm in aged care

The Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia (SHPA) has welcomed today's release of the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA)'s *Medicine Safety: Aged Care* report, backing the majority of recommendations one week after the publication of its expert-led *Standard of practice in geriatric medicine for pharmacy services*.

The PSA report outlines ten recommendations to improve safe and quality pharmacy care in Australia's aged care facilities, leading by reinforcing the call for physically embedded pharmacists within aged care facility teams.

In welcoming the report, SHPA Chief Executive Kristin Michaels says the mechanism through which pharmacists provide on-the-ground clinical services is crucial to improving the safety and quality of care.

'We are mindful that research shows, in many cases, the majority of pharmacy recommendations made through Residential Medication Management Reviews (RMMRs) do not translate into action by prescribers.

'As detailed in SHPA's response to the interim report of the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, we will continue to advocate for investment in clinical pharmacy services for aged care residents so pharmacists can identify and manage medication-related issues and reduce harm, while ensuring identification of deprescribing opportunities and high quality clinical handover as patients move between care settings.

'We believe this is best achieved through increased funding for aged care packages supporting direct employment, to ensure the highest standard of integrated, multidisciplinary care where it is needed most.'

Other recommendations included increased funding to aged care facilities to implement onsite electronic medication management (EMM) solutions and a dedicated research funding stream from the Medical Research Future Fund to develop and trial interventions to reduce medication-related harm in older Australians.

Ms Michaels says the PSA report adds further momentum to the commitment of Australia's pharmacy workforce to shift the dial on medicines safety in aged care.

'Developed with input from the Australian and New Zealand Society for Geriatric Medicine (ANZSGM), SHPA's [Standard of practice in geriatric medicine for pharmacy services](#) published in the current issue the *Journal of Pharmacy Practice and Research* (JPPR) outlines four central tenets of optimal geriatric pharmacy care and we look forward to supporting our members and partnering with stakeholders to advise on their uptake and implementation.'

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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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