

Media release

Friday 16 June 2023

Hospital pharmacists welcome healthcare investment in Queensland, support for pharmacists needed

The Society of Hospital Pharmacists Australia (SHPA) has welcomed the investment of more than \$24 billion in the ongoing delivery of health services in Queensland, announced in the state's budget this week.

Released by Queensland Treasurer, The Hon. Cameron Dick MP, [Queensland Budget 2023-24](#) includes \$10 billion for hospital bed capacity and \$2.9 billion toward initiatives that reduce ambulance ramping and address pressures on emergency departments, as well as those that boost women's health care and mental health care.

SHPA President Tom Simpson says commensurate funding for specialty hospital pharmacy positions is critical to maximising the efficiency, safety and value of hospital investment.

'Medicines are our most common healthcare intervention and many confer high risk in the hospital setting and on discharge, requiring specialty pharmacist expertise to ensure their safe and timely use.'

'Hospital pharmacists participating in collaborative prescribing initiatives relieve pressures on the health system while improving the safe and quality use of medicines and overall patient health outcomes.'

'One proven approach is Partnered Pharmacist Medication Charting (PPMC), shown to reduce length of hospital stay by 10% in other jurisdictions, and we believe implementation across Queensland emergency departments would be a cost-effective shot in the arm for patient bed flow.'

Mr Simpson says there remains an insufficient hospital pharmacy workforce in rural and regional areas, impacting the health of Queenslanders in these communities.

'It is positive to see \$22 million over four years in cost-of-living support for student nurses and midwives to undertake rural and regional placements, but these parts of Queensland are also in dire need of pharmacists.'

'Broadly, SHPA welcomes the nearly \$10 billion investment into increasing Queensland hospital bed capacity, delivering three new hospitals, 11 major hospital expansions and a new cancer centre.'

'However, investment in the future pharmacy workforce is imperative to appropriately staff these facilities according to SHPA's pharmacist-to-bed ratios in the *Standards of Practice for Clinical Pharmacy Services* to ensure every Queenslanders has access to optimal medicines management before, during and after period of acute care.'

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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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