

Media release

Friday 12 June 2020

7CPA a welcome move toward stronger pharmacy support for vulnerable communities

The Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia (SHPA) has welcomed the signing of the \$18.3 billion Seventh Community Pharmacy Agreement (7CPA), while noting opportunities to further expand important medicine management programs and services for Australia's more vulnerable communities.

The 7CPA, Australia's remuneration roadmap for the dispensing of subsidised PBS medicines, community pharmacy medication management programs and services, was signed in Canberra last night and will run for five years.

SHPA Chief Executive Kristin Michaels says the 7CPA is an important step toward earmarking the full funding measures and expanded clinical services needed to move the dial on Medicines Safety and Quality Use of Medicines, Australia's newly minted National Health Priority Area.

'We welcome the \$100m funding boost for important programs including Home Medicines Review (HMR), Residential Medication Management Review (RMMR) and MedsCheck, and we look forward to reorienting how Australia's hospitals can participate in the HMR program given recent rule changes.

'Publicly available data indicates approximately 30% of aged care residents receive an RMMR each year, so we would also support the necessary new funding commitments to lift this coverage.

'Medicines reviews are crucial for reducing the risk of medicine-related hospital readmissions – currently costing the healthcare system \$1.4 billion annually – and are best performed by dedicated, embedded geriatric medicine pharmacist roles.'

Ms Michaels says the greater funding predictability promised over the five-year agreement is important to prudent financial management of Australia's highly regarded pharmacy and medicines sector.

'We welcome risk sharing arrangements and structural reforms to dispensing remuneration to deliver funding certainty that is resilient to our changing PBS landscape, while noting Australia's hospitals – custodians of over 20 per cent of PBS expenditure – should be part of these important considerations.

SHPA also welcomed the expansion of the Closing the Gap PBS Co-payment Measure and greater access to Dose Administration Aids (DAA), while calling for complete pharmacist representation for future agreements.

'Accessibility continues to be a pressing issue in Australian health care and doubling the base cap for pharmacies providing DAA services, including uncapped access for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, is great to see.

'This expansion would be more powerful if complemented by hospital funding supporting patients' transition of care as they are discharged, needed to ensure DAAs are effective. Similarly, hospital pharmacies should be able to supply PBS medicines on discharge to Indigenous Australians under the Closing the Gap PBS Co-payment Measure, given the cost barriers on discharge preventing optimal medicines compliance.

'We also congratulate the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) on their new role as co-signatory to the agreement, an important broadening of consensus needed to better represent over 29,000 Australian pharmacists and the millions of Australians they serve every day.'

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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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