

Media release

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A new leadership legacy as SHPA celebrates International Women's Day

Through nomination and election to influential Boards and committees, as leaders of clinical and managerial teams and as recipients of major awards, women across Australian hospital pharmacy are challenging a legacy of traditional leadership, a shift recognised and celebrated by the Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia (SHPA) on [2021 International Women's Day](#).

With the bold theme inspiring women of all walks of life to [#ChooseToChallenge](#), this year's International Women's Day seeks to create an inclusive world by calling out gender bias and inequality and choosing to seek out and celebrate women's achievements.

SHPA Chief Executive Kristin Michaels says key organisational figures reflect its commitment to gender equity.

'Our membership currently comprises 76% women pharmacists and technicians, with 70% representation on the SHPA Board of Directors and 66% on the SHPA Executive.

'Shaping clinical practice and achievement, women lead 18 of SHPA's 27 Specialty Practice Leadership Committees, have received nearly 60% of SHPA Fellowships and more than half of our [three major annual awards](#) bestowed so far this century.'

In her November 2020 oration as recipient of SHPA's [Australian Clinical Pharmacy Award](#), Dr Erica Tong highlighted the importance of supporting women to achieve the fullness of their leadership goals.

'If we want to continue to expand our scope and increase the impact we can make on patient care, can we work together to develop sustainable models that ensure pharmacists are available when our patients need us? This is especially important with such a significant and valuable female workforce.

'I am proud we are able to support women in clinical leadership roles; currently all of the senior pharmacists working within my clinical program are women, and half are young mothers who work part-time. Without them, our clinical services would not be where they are now.

'I urge those in positions of influence to support flexible and part-time work in clinical leadership roles, and to encourage practice-based research including PhDs for pharmacists working in clinical positions.'

SHPA Chief Executive Kristin Michaels says it is appropriate that, as centres for innovation, hospitals are leading the way in professional gender equity.

'Research led by SHPA members and [published last year](#) predicted women will achieve an average of 50% representation in Australian pharmacy professional committees no sooner than 2029.

'We are proud to lead pharmacy in female representation across organisational leadership and governance, strengthening our advocacy on behalf of the predominantly female Australian hospital pharmacy workforce.'

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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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