

Media release

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Rollout passes 1m doses in state and territory clinics, as pharmacy primed for Moderna vaccine

The Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia (SHPA) commends the Federal Government's new vaccine deal with Moderna, [announced today](#) as [Australia marked the milestone of one million COVID-19 vaccines](#) administered across more than 500 state and territory vaccine clinics, for a total of 2.89m doses administered across all federal and jurisdictional vaccination sites.

SHPA Chief Executive Kristin Michaels says that as Australia's COVID-19 vaccine rollout grows dramatically in scale, hospital pharmacists and technicians are well-placed to continue to play a crucial role in the largest public health initiative in Australia's history.

'On behalf of our members on the frontline of this massive effort, we welcome the announcement today by Health Minister Greg Hunt that one million doses of the Moderna vaccine will arrive in Australia by September, with a further nine million doses by the end of the year.

'When the first COVID-19 vaccines arrived on Australia's shores in February, hospital pharmacists co-ordinated the ultra-low temperature storage, supply and distribution of vaccines, and when Phase 1a began in hospitals and state-run quarantine facilities, they managed the thawing, diluting, preparing, and drawing-up of vaccine doses, as well as administration in some sites.'

Ms Michaels says that hospital pharmacists – having supported the establishment of COVID-19 vaccination clinics in major hospitals – continue to lead the set-up and operation of state-run vaccination clinics across the country.

'This is a task requiring immense logistical skill as well as unparalleled, specialised medication management know-how, with state health departments announcing mass vaccination clinics that will administer up to 60,000 doses a week.

'The state and territory clinics are using both vaccines by Pfizer and AstraZeneca, and hospital pharmacists are uniquely equipped to handle more than one vaccine candidate simultaneously.

'Given these mass vaccination clinics are separated from hospitals and their physical resources, hospital pharmacists must consider everything: medicines security, maintaining the cold chain supply, backup power, equipment procurement, workforce and workflow optimisation.

'In many cases, hospital pharmacists are taking charge of preparing vaccines rather than leaving it to immunisers at the point of administration, thus maximising the immuniser workforce and helping to ensure vaccination demand is met.'

Ms Michaels says that thus far, only hospital pharmacists are currently involved in the COVID-19 vaccine program, and welcomes the [\\$35.8 million investment](#) in Federal Budget 2021-22 for a temporary community pharmacy program to administer both vaccine doses to patients throughout Phase 2 and Phase 3 of the national rollout.

'It's an incredibly powerful symbiosis across our healthcare system and pharmacists everywhere should be very proud of the central roles they're playing.'

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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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