

# Media release

Friday 22 November 2019

## Hospital pharmacists striking the patient safety balance

The central challenge of balancing the efficacy and safety of medicines is investigated from a range of hospital pharmacy perspectives in the latest issue of the Society of Hospitals Pharmacists of Australia (SHPA)'s member magazine, released this month.

Landing just before the blockbuster Medicines Management 2019, 45<sup>th</sup> SHPA National Conference took over the Gold Coast, [Pharmacy Growth, Research, Innovation and Training \(Pharmacy GRIT\)](#) also explores the complexity of medicines from a policy perspective, and the opportunities afforded to members and broader Australian pharmacy through SHPA's Memorandum of Understanding with the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA), signed in July.

Ms Michaels says the Spring issue – [free, as always](#) to SHPA members – offers timely reflection on what constitutes 'medicines leadership', as Australian pharmacy anticipates the signing of the 7<sup>th</sup> Community Pharmacy Agreement and the review, next year, of the National Medicines Policy.

'To ensure Australian gain the greatest possible benefit from medicine use, medicine leadership must consider the workforce as well as industry and consumer concerns.

'The successful combination of effective medicine, provided in an accessible manner, with appropriate pharmacist care, is essential for the positive patient outcomes we all seek.'

In the issue, SHPA members Lisa Harris, Caroline Weiling Law and Beata Stanley share patient case studies and projects across the country – demonstrating what medication safety looks like in 2019 in the key settings of antimicrobial stewardship and opioid stewardship – while advocate Melissa Sheldrick shares lessons for Australia following the loss of her son and her subsequent fight to improve medication safety across her native Canada.

SHPA Chief Executive Kristin Michaels says hospital pharmacists are consistently required to make contextual decisions that balance the efficacy and safety of medicines.

'As the first issue of *Pharmacy GRIT* since Medication Safety was declared Australia's next National Health Priority Area by Health Minister Greg Hunt, our members have risen to the challenge of describing the complexity of their everyday clinical work.

'At every point of interaction, with patients and colleagues, pharmacists need to make decisions simultaneously balancing the specific information available, with the breadth of their knowledge and experience.

'Indeed the phrase "desprescribing" first appeared in SHPA's flagship journal, the *Journal of Pharmacy Practice and Research*, a clear sign that hospital pharmacists are committed patient-first practice and care above all else.'

– ends –

### For more information contact:

Nick Sharp-Paul, Head of Strategy and Communication  
[nsharp-paul@shpa.org.au](mailto:nsharp-paul@shpa.org.au) | 0411 098 838

## 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.

[shpa.org.au](http://shpa.org.au) |   