

# Media release

Monday 2 May 2022

## Hospital Pharmacists welcome bipartisan support for reduced PBS co-payments, guaranteeing cheaper medicines

The Society of Hospital Pharmacists Australia (SHPA) welcomes the Federal Labor Party's announcement pledging to reduce the general patient Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) co-payment from \$42.50 to \$30 from 1 January 2023, and their bipartisan support to improve medicines affordability and access for Australians, guaranteeing Australians more affordable medicines from 2023.

At yesterday's Labor campaign launch Leader of the Opposition the Hon. Anthony Albanese MP, and Shadow Minister for Health and Ageing the Hon. Mark Butler MP, jointly announced a \$190 million package to reduce out-of-pocket costs for Australians requiring treatment with PBS medicines and a commitment to listing every medicine recommended by the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee.

SHPA Chief Executive Kristin Michaels says this equates to a saving of \$150 per year for Australians taking a PBS medicine regularly, \$30 more than what was pledged by the Coalition government over the weekend.

'With the rising costs of living we know many Australians, particularly our most vulnerable patients – those belonging to lower socioeconomic groups, and those who suffer from multiple chronic conditions – are increasingly struggling to afford medicines.'

Hospital Pharmacists are responsible for 24% of all PBS expenditure, supplying just under five million PBS prescriptions annually to patients, and these significant figures continue to grow year on year.

'Hospital Pharmacists and their healthcare colleagues, who are keenly aware of the barriers patients face when attempting to receive timely and quality access to life-saving medicines, welcome this bipartisan support for guaranteeing significant savings for PBS medicines.'

Ms Michaels says Hospital Pharmacists often see patients presenting to emergency departments or being re-admitted to hospital, because they were unable to access their required medicines or suffered a decline in their health due to not being able to afford medicines.

'Hospital Pharmacists provide care to the most unwell and complex patients in our healthcare system, many of whom find themselves discharged with a long list of medicines, and who privately admit they will struggle to meet the cost of their discharge medicines.'

'We welcome the bipartisan support to further reduce co-payment amounts for PBS medicines and improved medicines affordability for patients, many of whom are still required to pay well above standard co-payment amounts for non-PBS medicines. This will inevitably reduce preventable admissions and keep more Australians out of the hospital system.'

'On behalf of our members, we call for further action to address medicines access and affordability for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who currently face higher PBS co-payments in hospital settings. This is central to SHPA's [Federal Election 2022 policy priorities](#), and we look forward to working on this issue with all parliamentarians.'

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**For more information contact:**

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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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