

Media release

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Tassie invests in patient safety: More than 30 new Hospital Pharmacy Technician positions announced

Tasmanian hospital patients and the health professionals providing their care are set to benefit from a visionary medication safety investment by the Tasmanian Government that will see a Hospital Pharmacy Technician on every ward of all acute hospitals in the state, realising the foremost recommendation from The Society of Hospital Pharmacist of Australia's (SHPA) [Tasmanian Budget 2022-23 submission](#).

Announced this week by Deputy Premier and Minister for Health, Jeremy Rockliff MP, with first implementation by end of April, the Bedside Medication Management approach will see ward-based Pharmacy Technicians in place to improve timeliness of medication treatments, reduce medication waste and decrease non-nursing and midwifery tasks, freeing up more time for direct patient care, all of which will improve patient safety across Tasmanian hospitals.

Tom Simpson, Executive Director, Statewide Hospital Pharmacy says the investment will realise over [30 new Hospital Pharmacy Technician positions](#).

'We know that wards where Hospital Pharmacy Technicians manage medications have lower levels of missed doses and omitted doses, which pose some of the biggest medication safety risks to patients.

'The Bedside Medication Management program will see ward-based Pharmacy Technicians taking on responsibility for ensuring every medication is available for every patient, as close to the bedside as possible.

'In an Australian first, the establishment of a Statewide Pharmacy Technician Manager position will give an executive leadership voice to this growing workforce, and provide an enhanced career structure for Pharmacy Technicians.'

Funding has also been provided for additional medication trolleys, IT equipment, and subsidised training for Hospital Pharmacy Technician trainees.

Mr Simpson, who is also Vice Chair of SHPA's Tasmanian Branch Committee and recipient of the 2019 SHPA Medal of Merit, says the investment reflects the strength of partnerships between professionals providing care to Tasmanians in hospital.

'During extensive pilot programs, 95% of nurses surveyed felt the ward-based Pharmacy Technician became an essential member of the ward and regarded their service as successful.

'Nurses reported much higher levels of satisfaction on wards that have a Pharmacy Technician, as well as much less time spent finding medications, time which can be spent providing direct care.

'Crucially, the trial of Pharmacy Technicians on wards improved patient outcomes and reduced their length of stay in hospital, benefits that will now be realised across the state.'

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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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