

Media release

Friday 13 May 2022

Investment in WA healthcare welcomed, but Hospital Pharmacy workforce must be bolstered to realise full benefits

The Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia (SHPA) has welcomed the Western Australian Government's 2022-23 Budget but cautions the announced \$1.3 billion expenditure in hospitals and pandemic preparedness will have limited impact without developing Australia's current and future workforce of Hospital Pharmacists.

Handed down yesterday by WA Premier and Treasurer the Hon. Mark McGowan MP, the 2022-23 WA State Budget promises to invest a record \$2.5 billion in the state's health services, with an additional \$1.3 billion to be invested in WA Health services and infrastructure, \$995 million on health-related spending in response to COVID-19, and a further \$181 million boost for mental health services.

SHPA Chief Executive Kristin Michaels welcomed the further \$995 million investment to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

'Hospital Pharmacists are intimately involved in the supply of COVID-19 antiviral medicines, which keep Western Australians with COVID-19 out of hospitals as they reduce severity of COVID-19 disease.

'This is timely just as COVID-19 caseloads in Western Australia have reached new peaks recently, with pressures on emergency department capacity and ambulance services continuing.

'Throughout the pandemic, Hospital Pharmacists in Western Australia have operated the state-run vaccination clinics, and provided innovative care models to COVID-19 patients such as Hospital In The Home, providing effective coordination of care in the community and minimising COVID-19 hospitalisations.

'Hospital Pharmacists also welcome the uplift in the funding for the \$252 million Emergency Department Reform Package, specifically 17 initiatives to improve hospital emergency capacity and address ambulance ramping. This funding must also include provision for Emergency Medicine Pharmacists, who are proven to improve bedflow and reduce length of admission for patients, thus improving hospital efficiency.'

Ms Michaels says almost \$1.3b additional spend on WA Health services and infrastructure, coupled with multifaceted spending on hospitals and aged care, underscores the importance of developing a National Pharmacy Workforce Plan, a [key Federal election priority for the Hospital Pharmacy sector](#).

'The specialised Hospital Pharmacy sector is experiencing recruitment challenges across all Australian hospitals, both in metropolitan and regional areas.

'While the investment into the WA medical workforce in Budget 2022-23 is great news for our hospital colleagues, at the same time we must look ahead and fund the training and development of expert pharmacists, and plan the Hospital Pharmacy roles Australia needs to safely and fully realise the benefit of these investments now and into the future.'

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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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