

Media release

Monday 3 June 2019

SHPA welcomes strong health focus in Albanese shadow ministry

The Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia (SHPA) has congratulated the Hon Chris Bowen MP on his appointment as Shadow Health Minister in the new Labor shadow ministry, announced by Federal Opposition Leader Anthony Albanese yesterday.

On behalf of the Board of Directors and members, SHPA Chief Executive Kristin Michaels also welcomed the appointment of the Hon Julie Collins MP as Shadow Minister for Ageing and Seniors.

Ms Michaels says Mr Bowen's extensive knowledge of the complexity and cost pressures of Australia's health system is positive to address the increasing needs of Australian patients, hospitals and health services.

'We welcome the appointment of Mr Bowen to this pivotal shadow portfolio and look forward to a close working relationship as we ensure the sustainability of the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS), a pillar of Australia's health system.'

'As custodians of 20% of Australia's substantial and expanding PBS budget, hospital pharmacists are uniquely placed to ensure the sustainability of this important scheme, which improves equity of access to some of the most important and expensive medicines for many of Australia's most unwell patients.'

'Hospital pharmacists provide essential pharmacy services to support the safe and quality use of complex medicines administered in hospital – such as cancer medicines – which is only possible with sufficient remuneration to hospital pharmacists.'

'SHPA looks forward to continuing discussion with the Federal Opposition on impending changes to remuneration for Australia's hospital pharmacists.'

In welcoming Ms Collins to the Ageing and Seniors shadow portfolio, Ms Michaels noted current limitations of Australia's aged care system.

'Currently, SHPA members recognise our system does not adequately manage aged care residents' pharmacy care needs. Recent evidence given at the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety has highlighted many cases of inappropriate medication use, putting senior Australians at risk of serious adverse medication events resulting in admission to hospital.'

'As an organisation, SHPA is proud to contribute to the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, with a submission outlining a six-point plan that will result in positive health outcomes for older Australians.'

Ms Michaels also congratulated SHPA member Emma McBride MP on her appointment as Shadow Assistant Minister for Mental Health and Shadow Assistant Minister for Carers.

'SHPA is committed to supporting members who have a specialty focus on mental health pharmacy practice, having established Mental Health as an integrated advocacy, education and networking stream within our Specialty Practice program.'

'We look forward to working even more closely with Ms McBride in this rapidly developing space.'

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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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