

# Frequently Asked Questions

## What is the SHPA Victorian hospital pharmacy intern program?

SHPA coordinates applications and efficiently, transparently and fairly matches candidates for Victorian Government subsidised internships as well as a number of Victorian public hospital funded internships.

## Am I eligible to apply for the positions?

- **Australian and New Zealand citizens and Australian permanent residents** who have completed, or will complete a registrable pharmacy degree in 2019, are eligible to apply for positions.
- Graduates from Victorian universities will be considered for the first round of matching, and the second, if required.
- Interstate graduates who are Australian or New Zealand citizens or Australian permanent residents are considered after two rounds of matching. They can apply for any position in the round that is not DHHS funded.
- International students are not eligible to apply for DHHS funded positions.

## How many positions are available?

85 Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) funded and some hospital self-funded Victorian public hospital pharmacy intern training positions are available in 2020 through SHPA's matching process.

Please note, for those hospitals who are in partnership with a hospital, please apply to the primary hospital (the one listed) as they will decide which hospital the internship will be at.

Students will be asked to preference all hospitals unless you would NOT accept a position there.

## Will there be a Round 2 or 3?

SHPA expects the process to result in few, if any, positions remaining after the first match. Last year all but five positions were filled in the first round. More information will be provided to candidates if second and third rounds are available.

## How does SHPA's process work?

### Application Process

1. Fourth year pharmacy students apply online for an intern placement in the following year by providing personal contact details, information about citizenship, student number and the university attended, two equal first preference hospitals to apply for, a CV, a cover letter for each hospital and ranking of remaining hospitals.
2. Applications are open for two weeks through SHPA's portal via Smarty Grants website.
3. According to DHHS Guidelines, Australian and New Zealand citizens or Australian permanent residents who have completed a Victorian pharmacy degree are given preference for the 85 intern positions offered in this DHHS-funded program,

### **Transfer of Information**

4. SHPA sorts student preferences for hospitals who participate in the intern placement program. Applications are sorted based on student's preference order for each hospital.
5. SHPA sends student applications to the two hospitals listed as the two equal first preference hospitals. Students may have an application sent to a third or fourth hospital, in the case where a hospital has an insufficient number of applications. If so, students will be asked to provide a cover letter for this (within 24hrs of request).
6. SHPA removes incomplete or duplicate applications but does not review, recommend or decline applications.

### **Hospitals screen, interview and select candidates**

7. Hospital pharmacy departments receive completed applications as submitted. They can use any legal method they choose to decide who to interview.

### **Following interviews**

8. After the selection process, hospitals return a list of preferred candidates to SHPA. Concurrently, students are asked to submit their final ranked list of preferred hospitals to SHPA. These two lists form the basis of the matching process.

### **The matching process**

9. In order to be efficient and fair, any candidate can only receive one offer through this process. Therefore, SHPA matches student ranked lists against health service lists using a published standard [algorithm](#). The algorithm matches each student with their preferred available position, provided the candidate is also preferred by the health service.

For example: student X has hospital Z as their first preference. The committee looks at hospital Z's list of successful students to see if student X's name is on the list in the allocated number of intern positions. If so, student X secures a place at hospital Z. If not, the committee sees if student X is on other hospital lists - they may receive an interview

at their second preference hospital and may secure their second preference if they are placed in the number of allocated intern positions for that hospital.

This system favours the preferences provided by students, so they receive their highest preference hospital.

10. If a student was offered their first preference hospital and their second preference hospital, they receive their first preference hospital and their name is crossed off their second preference hospital list and other applicants below them move up the list one place.

### **Finalisation of the process**

11. After the matching process is complete, a list of successfully matched students is forwarded to pharmacy departments and students are notified if their application is successful or unsuccessful.
12. If unmatched hospital positions remain, details are forwarded to hospitals by SHPA if students listed those hospitals in their preference list and they have not already been allocated to a hospital. **Hospitals determine who they select for the remaining positions.** SHPA is not involved in this part of the process.
13. Unsuccessful applicants may wish to consider approaching private hospitals or community pharmacies and should monitor SHPA's [jobs board](#).

### **How do I apply? When do applications open and close?**

Applications are collected through SHPA's portal via Smarty Grants website.

- Students are required to supply a cover letter and CV for their two equal first preference hospitals
- Online applications open at **9:00am Wednesday 24 July 2019**
- Applications close at **11.59pm Wednesday 7 August 2019.**

### **When is the screening process undertaken?**

Hospitals interview and select candidates between **Wednesday 14 August 2019** to **Wednesday 11 September 2019** using any legal method they choose including CVs, cover letters, interviews or a combination of these and other methods.

### **I have a placement, exam or other commitment during the selection period. What do I do?**

If you are contacted by a hospital, make sure you advise them of your availability.

### **Do I need to contact hospitals?**

Students should not contact hospitals directly regarding the application process. SHPA manages application and matching processes. All questions should be directed to [vicintern@shpa.org.au](mailto:vicintern@shpa.org.au).

### **What if I don't want to work at a particular hospital(s)?**

Do not rank them.

### **Does the program include private hospital intern placements?**

No. Private hospitals may also have intern positions available, however, these positions are advertised on individual websites, recruitment websites such as [Seek](#) or on SHPA's [jobs board](#).

### **Will I get an interview at my two equal first preference hospitals?**

SHPA does not decide how hospitals screen and select candidates.

### **Does my final preference list need to be the same as my application list?**

No. SHPA will email you by **Thursday 12 September 2019** asking for your final ranked list of preferred hospitals.

### **Does a hospital know where I ranked it?**

No. Your preference list is submitted to SHPA and is not shared with hospitals.

You should not disclose your hospital preference list to anyone other than the SHPA, nor should you enquire about hospitals preference lists during the application process. If you have concerns regarding your preference list email [vicintern@shpa.org.au](mailto:vicintern@shpa.org.au).

### **Can I receive a job offer at more than one hospital?**

No. If more than one hospital includes you on their preferred candidates list, you will only receive an offer at the hospital you ranked highest in your final preference list.

### **If a hospital includes me on their preferred candidate list, and I have them ranked first, will I be matched there?**

Not necessarily. Hospitals' preferred candidates list will generally be longer than the number of positions available. For example, if a hospital has five available internships, it is possible that you were ranked 10th on that hospital's preferred candidate list and missed out on a position because five students ranked higher than you matched with that hospital.

### **If a hospital ranks me first, will I obtain that position?**

If a hospital ranks you first, then you WILL be offered that position UNLESS you also receive an offer from a hospital ranked higher on your final preference list.

**If I receive a job offer, can I defer and take a gap year?**

No, you cannot defer the position. If you wish to undertake your hospital internship in 2021, you must reapply next year.

**When will I know if I have been matched to an intern program?**

SHPA aim to inform students of their match result by **Tuesday 24 September 2019**.

**I have been matched to a hospital, but I wish to refuse this match because I believe that there are other positions available which I prefer. Can I do this?**

No. You will only be matched once. If you wish to change your preferences, you must do this by **Thursday 12 September 2019**.

**What strategy should I use to increase my chances of a match?**

When completing your application:

- Think about the experiences you are looking for to enhance your pharmacy career?
  - Big or small hospital; city or regional; cancer care or indigenous health etc
- How will an internship at your preferred hospitals support your pharmacy career?
- Competition is very strong; how will you stand out from the crowd?

With respect to the final ranking and match, ***the only strategy that benefits you as a student is to rank hospitals in your preferred order.*** This has been demonstrated numerous times with other matching systems.

Contact SHPA at [vicintern@shpa.org.au](mailto:vicintern@shpa.org.au) if you have other questions.