

# Media release

Thursday 2 December 2021

## Hospital Pharmacists congratulate Federal Health Minister Greg Hunt on retirement from politics

The Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia (SHPA) today congratulates Federal Health Minister Greg Hunt on the announcement of his retirement from federal politics at the next federal election, expected to be in May 2022.

SHPA Chief Executive Kristin Michaels extended congratulations to Minister Hunt on his successful two-decade career in federal politics in various roles and, most importantly in the past five years, overseeing major reforms and managing challenges as the Minister for Health and Aged Care.

'The COVID-19 pandemic has upended our lives over the past two years, and we pay tribute to Minister Hunt for his role in managing this unprecedented public health crisis. Today, Australia has one of the world's lowest mortality rates as well as the highest vaccination rates, which has been enabled by Minister Hunt's leadership among federal and state government colleagues.

'To date, more than 39 million COVID-19 vaccinations have been administered around Australia, with over 16 million of these being administered in state and territory clinics where Hospital Pharmacists are integral to their operation. This would not have been possible without the Federal Government's procurement of COVID19 vaccines.'

Over the past five years, Minister Hunt has overseen several landmark reforms, policies and programs, such as record investment into aged care following the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, record expenditure on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) to ensure timely access to new medicines for Australians, and reforms to medicines shortages and opioid medicines.

Ms Michaels says Minister Hunt has overseen record investment into the PBS, including establishing the New Medicines Funding Guarantee, ensuring Australians have affordable access to new medicines and treatments to treat complex diseases.

'Many of the PBS listings in recent years are high-cost and complex medicines used in hospital settings to treat complex and serious diseases such as cancers and autoimmune diseases. In the five years Minister Hunt has led the Health portfolio, Hospital Pharmacy has continued to account for a larger slice of the PBS pie, with 2020/21 figures confirming Hospital Pharmacy is responsible for 25% of all PBS expenditure.

'In particular, important reforms and actions by Minister Hunt have worked to mitigate the impact of medicines shortages, described in SHPA's report [Medicine shortages in Australia: A snapshot of shortages in Australian hospitals](#) and which have negatively affected Hospital Pharmacists and their patients for many years, through mandatory reporting and committing pharmaceutical sponsors to minimum stockholdings. The impact of medicines shortages has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and these reforms will reduce supply disruptions to patients and their care.

'We pay tribute to Minister Hunt for his contribution to the Health and Aged Care portfolio and wish him all the best for the future.'

– ends –

**For more information contact:**

Susie Brown, Communications and Media Advisor

[sbrown@shpa.org.au](mailto:sbrown@shpa.org.au) | 0437 119 286

**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.

[shpa.org.au](http://shpa.org.au) |   