

Media release

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Australia's first pharmacy standard for heart disease released

The first Australian pharmacy practice standard for treating cardiovascular disease has been released by the Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia (SHPA), recommending patient to pharmacist ratios and quality improvement indicators specific to specialist cardiology pharmacists, and detailing how to add innovative, emerging cardiology services to core practice to ensure best care.

The [Standard of practice in cardiology for pharmacy services](#) leads the February issue of SHPA's flagship *Journal of Pharmacy Practice and Research* (JPPR).

SHPA Cardiology Chair Adam Livori says the standards highlight present and future pathways for cardiology pharmacy services – 'from the cath lab to rehab'.

'Pharmacists can provide a wealth of knowledge and assistance to patient care, directly improve clinical outcomes, and are an asset to the multi-disciplinary team as supported by national and international guidelines.

'These new standards define cardiology pharmacy services, guide implementation and encourage adaptability of models of care to address the dynamic landscape of health care across the system.'

Lead author and SHPA Cardiology Leadership Committee member Joanna Pizzi says the new standard reflects the broad range of cardiac interventions and care settings in Australia.

'Our recommended patient to pharmacist ratios range from 8:1 in areas of medical intervention and review, such as cardiac rehabilitation centres or heart failure clinics, to 20:1 for patients hospitalised for lower risk procedures.

'Similarly, our new "Essential and emerging cardiology services for pharmacists" table details 43 care activities applicable to all settings – as well as inpatient, outpatient and operational settings specifically – which, when led by specialist Cardiology Pharmacists, will help ensure optimal outcomes for patients with heart disease.

'As the number of Australians requiring hospitalisation continues to grow and cases increase in complexity, this standard also details key knowledge, skills and experiential learning for Cardiology Pharmacists.

'By combining with guidance on tailoring quality indicators from leading Australian and European sources to target and achieve the best outcomes for all patient groups, this standard seeks to help ensure sustainability and performance improvement in this critical workforce, to the benefit of all Australians requiring acute cardiovascular care.'

SHPA Chief Executive Kristin Michaels says cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death and disease burden in Australia and worldwide.

'This burden is expected to grow due to our ageing population and increased prevalence of diseases, such as obesity and diabetes mellitus, which are major risk factors for cardiovascular disease.

'It is important to highlight pathways to future-focused cardiology pharmacy services in all care settings to ensure equity of access for Australians at risk of cardiovascular disease, which disproportionately affects older Australians and indigenous populations.'

The February 2022 issue of *JPPR* is now available, [free – as always – for SHPA members](#).

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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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