

Placement process: fact sheet

The Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia (SHPA) coordinates the application process for government-subsidised (and some hospital self-funded) Victorian public hospital pharmacy intern placements. Our aim is to efficiently, transparently and fairly match candidates for internship to hospitals with intern positions.

Application Process

1. Fourth year pharmacy students are able to apply online for an intern placement in the following year. The application asks for personal contact details, information about citizenship, student number and the university you are attending, two equal first preference hospitals to apply for, your CV, a cover letter for each hospital and ranking of remaining hospitals.
2. Applications are open for two weeks and can be accessed through the SHPA website.
3. According to the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Guidelines, Australian and New Zealand citizens or permanent residents who have completed a Victorian pharmacy degree are given preference for the 80 intern positions offered in this program, as the program is funded by DHHS.

Transfer of Information

4. After applications have closed, SHPA sorts student preferences for the 23 hospitals who participate in the intern placement program. Applications are sorted based on the 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 hospital from their other higher ranked preferences, in the case where a hospital has an insufficient no. of applications – students will be asked to provide a cover letter for this third hospital (within 24hrs of request)
6. Students applications are forwarded to their two preferred hospitals only on the basis of their preference, and potentially to a third on the basis of their preferences and relative popularity of each program. SHPA will remove incomplete or duplicate applications, but does not otherwise review, recommend or decline applications.

Hospital screening of candidates

7. Hospital pharmacy departments receive the applications. The hospital pharmacy screen and rank candidates. They can use any legal method they choose to do this, including CVs, cover letters, interviews or a combination of these and other methods.

Ranking of students who were interviewed

8. After the screening process, hospitals return a ranked list of candidates to the SHPA. Concurrently, students are requested to submit a ranked list of hospitals to the SHPA. Students and pharmacy departments should be aware that ranking a health service or student respectively may result in a match.

The matching process

9. SHPA matches student first preferences against the hospital lists. Members of the pharmacy intern allocation group meet at the SHPA offices and go through **each** student application to see if a match can be made with their first preferred hospital. For example student X might have 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 within the allocated number of intern positions. If so, student X has secured a place at hospital Z. If not, the committee sees if student X is on any of the other hospital lists- they might have received an interview at their second preferred hospital and they might 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 preferred hospital.
10. If a student was offered their first preferred hospital and their second preferred 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, the list of successfully matched students is forwarded to the pharmacy department and students are notified by email if their application was successful or unsuccessful.
12. If unmatched hospital positions remain after the process, details of unmatched applicants will be forwarded to the hospitals by SHPA, if students listed those hospitals in their preference list and they have not already been allocated to a hospital.
The hospitals will determine who they screen for the remaining positions.
SHPA is not involved in this part of the process.
13. Unsuccessful students will have to consider other options to secure an intern position outside this Victorian Government funded program. They may consider approaching private hospitals or community pharmacies and monitor the SHPA [jobs board](#).