

SHPA Branch Guidelines 2020

Introduction

The Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia (SHPA) Branch Guidelines support and complement the SHPA Constitution (2017) in defining the form and function of SHPA's Branches as they work in partnership with the SHPA Secretariat to support members nationally.

Branch Guidelines are reviewed every two years and finalised in consultation with Branch Chairs and delegates. Any questions regarding guidelines should, in the first instance, be directed to the SHPA Secretariat.

Branch Guidelines provide guidance for members regarding Branch Committee activities to ensure consistency across all Branches. Through this document, SHPA seeks to provide a structure and functional guidelines that are as simple as possible, transparent and helpful to Branches.

The purpose of Branches

Branches are a crucial component of every member's engagement with SHPA. Each member is assigned a Branch relative to their location when they first join. Branches are a frequent point of contact providing invitations to continuing education, social and networking opportunities; communication about regional issues and calls for consultation, and the chance to participate in meetings and nominate for Branch committees.

Geographically delineated, Branches are commonly the starting point for members to contribute to the advancement of their profession, extend their professional development and expand their leadership skills. Branch Committee members are joined by Board Directors and an Executive Representative (observer) from the Secretariat at committee meetings providing greater opportunities for direct engagement in, and feedback on national SHPA activity.

SHPA supports Branches to accomplish their role in achieving the organisations' strategic priorities which are outlined in our [strategic vision, purpose and values](#). The key roles of SHPA Branches are to deliver localised education, drive and increase membership, and shape jurisdictional content and build connections that support SHPA's advocacy.

Branch Guidelines (2020)

Regulation 1. Establishment of Branches

The Board may establish geographical Branches for the overarching purpose of facilitating the work of the Society.

SHPA supports the continuation of Branches in Victoria, New South Wales, Western Australia, Queensland, ACT, Tasmania and the combined Branch of South Australia and Northern Territory. Any proposed change to this structure should be presented by Full Pharmacist and Technician members of two or more years membership to the SHPA Board for consideration.

Groups supported by Branches operate at the discretion of the Branch Chair. Members are encouraged to participate in both federal and jurisdictional groups of interest to them to share expertise and innovation nationally. Groups which are limited to members from a specific region or area are overseen by the Branch Committee.

'Subcommittees' formally represent SHPA, are responsible for organising events and have control of SHPA expenditure.

'Working groups' are characterised as network of members who informally liaise with each other via email to discuss a topic or area of interest, but which have no formal responsibility for budget or education.

Regulation 2. The Purpose of Branches

The principal purpose of Branches are to facilitate the work of the Society.

SHPA Branches provide jurisdictional expertise and engagement enabling the organisation to achieve its strategic plan. Operationally this covers three key focus areas: education, membership, and advocacy.

2.1 Education

Branches coordinate the planning and delivery of continuing education for local and national members and other interested parties in partnership with the Secretariat.

Branches are encouraged to provide a minimum of ten (10) hours of localised Continuing Education per annum. These sessions are facilitated by subject matter experts from within the Branch, the broader membership or the local health networks, either face-to-face, or via webinar. Attendance is usually charged at a nominal fee as set from time to time by the National Secretariat. More information on education pricing is available from the [Education team](#).

SHPA encourages Branches to offer an appropriate amount of Group 2 CPD to reflect members' interests. Consideration should also be given to [SHPA's National Event Calendar](#), timing, and location to meet member needs. The needs and access of members in regional, rural and remote areas must also be taken into consideration.

Refer to the [SHPA Acknowledgment of Country Guidelines](#) for appropriate approaches to preparing and verbally delivering Acknowledgment of Country for events, gatherings and meetings associated with any SHPA Branch business.

2.2 Advocacy

Branches may identify and develop advocacy opportunities such as state government requests for policy submissions, or media coverage in partnership with the Secretariat.

Branch Committees, or delegates, facilitate submission drafting, attend consultations, and review materials where jurisdictional or representative input is required. Examples of past submissions, templates and policy analysis support is available from the [Secretariat](#).

Opportunities for media coverage should be facilitated by the Secretariat in line with the organisation's Media Policy. It is noted that Branches do not speak to the media on behalf of the organisation.

2.3 Membership

Branches partner with the Secretariat to encourage the recruitment and retention of new members and supporting existing members through the provision of networking opportunities such as social events.

As active SHPA members, Branch Committee members are ideally placed to advocate the benefits of SHPA membership to their colleagues (including technicians and interns), and to pharmacists at events including university information sessions.

Branches are encouraged to communicate with members on a regular basis via newsletters or Facebook groups. Assistance with templates or the creation and moderation of social media is provided by the Secretariat.

Regulation 3. Membership of the Branch

Branch membership consists of full pharmacists, technicians, fellows, students, provisional pharmacists and any honorary members (as outlined in the [Constitution](#)) living in the designated Branch area. Allocation of membership is determined by residential address, however members can nominate an alternative branch affiliation via the [SHPA website](#). Members cannot be affiliated with more than one Branch at a time.

Organisational SHPA members are not affiliated with a Branch as their activities may transcend jurisdictional boundaries.

Branch representation for Tasmania should cover at least one committee member from each of the three regions; North West, North and South. Following annual Branch Committee elections, preference should be given to Branch Committee nominees from any region that will not have representation following the retiring of members prior to that election. If no nominations are received from unrepresented regions, no preference should be given to any nominees.

Regulation 4. Procedures for holding annual and special meetings of Branch members

Annual Branch Meeting (ABM) arrangements, like other Branch meeting arrangements, are at the discretion of the Branch Chair.

SHPA encourages all Branches to hold an end-of-year meeting providing annual membership information, financial information, activity updates, and any governance activities to fulfil the traditional purpose of an Annual Business Meeting (ABM). While there is no mandate for Branches to hold an end-of-year meeting, arranging for one to be held a few weeks after (no specific number of days required) SHPA's Annual General Meeting (AGM) gives Branches access to shared membership and financial information.

Social events (i.e. networking, Christmas party or trivia night) coinciding with annual or special Branch meetings should be budgeted through the Branch's annual budgetary process. Contact the Secretariat for support.

Where annual or special meetings are not held SHPA notes that annual membership information, financial information, activity updates, and governance information is provided to all Members via the SHPA Annual General Meeting, annual Audited Financial Reports and SHPA Annual Report. SHPA also recommends that, at the discretion of the Branch Chair, a one-page overview of Branch activities and financial information be made available to Branch members when a majority do not attend the annual meeting. The Secretariat Communications Team will provide a template for Branches to utilise.

Refer to the [SHPA Acknowledgment of Country Guidelines](#) for appropriate approaches to preparing and verbally delivering Acknowledgment of Country for events, gatherings and meetings associated with any SHPA Branch business.

Regulation 5. The composition, powers (including powers to delegate) and responsibilities of the Branch Committee or its sub-committees

Branch Committees consist of nine elected members comprising Full Pharmacist, Fellow member, or Technician members (excluding provisional and student members) plus a Board Director from the Branch jurisdiction who holds full committee rights. Observers, including students, residents, early career pharmacists or rural pharmacists are invited to participate at the discretion of the Branch Chair/Committee. All observer positions must be renewed annually by the appointed Branch Chair.

Due to the strategic importance of the pharmacy technician workforce, SHPA Branches must have a designated technician representative on each Branch Committee. This position is voted for during committee elections by a separate ballot. The technician representative can hold a joint role i.e. technician representative/and any other formal committee role, including an executive role.

Technicians can only nominate for either the technician representative position or the Branch committee position, they cannot nominate for both. This is to avoid one person being voted in for two roles or votes becoming void. If the technician representative role is not filled at the election, the position will be left vacant and can be filled by the Chair if an appropriate candidate becomes interested.

Regulation 6. The manner of election or appointment to the Branch Committee

SHPA supports the election of Branch Committees through a ballot at a committee meeting or online election (at the Branch Chair's discretion) to support the highest rate of voting by Branch members. The use of postal ballot is not supported.

All Full, Provisional, Technician and Life members associated with a Branch are entitled to vote in Branch Committee elections for all positions including the representative technician position. Members with lapsed membership at the time of electoral list extraction may be unable to vote unless special dispensation from the SHPA Chief Executive is requested and dues are paid.

Provisional pharmacists can nominate for Branch Committee positions if they plan to receive General registration within six months of their prospective election. This is due to the alignment of Branch Committee elections (October) and AHPRA registration (early the following year) and aims to circumvent ineligibility of Provisional pharmacist members at the time of the election. If an elected Provisional pharmacist does NOT receive their full registration within six months of their election, they will step down and the position will be filled by a casual vacancy for the remaining year.

In-line with SHPA Board Director election processes, Branch elections are overseen by SHPA's Company Secretary and nominations for Branch Committees must be provided to the SHPA Secretariat by 5.00pm AEST/AEDT on the designated date.

Election results should be provided to SHPA's Chief Executive and Branch Chair at least 24 hours before a Branch ABM, unless the Branch Chair is nominated, in which case the Chief Executive and Branch Secretary, or another member of the Branch Executive, are to be advised.

An election is not required when fewer nominations are received than positions available.

Unfilled positions can be filled by casual vacancies which are appointed at the Branch Chair's discretion and may include selection of a candidate with the next highest votes from a timely election (within six months). If a committee member resigns early in their post (within six months of election), they must email the Branch Chair and Secretariat to inform them of their resignation. Secretariat can then advertise for the casual vacancy for the remaining year. If a committee member resigns at the later part of the year, the position can

remain empty or can be filled by a casual vacancy at the Branch Chair’s discretion. Casual vacancies must be appointed by the designated Branch Chair when assuming their role – they cannot be filled prior to the incoming committee taking office. Positions filled by casual vacancies are vacated for election at the next opportunity (i.e. end of a single term).

Committee roles can be filled by percentage of votes, i.e. the candidate with the highest votes takes a longer term, and the candidate with the lowest votes is still elected, taking a shorter term. If an online election is not needed, an informal ballot can take place at the respective Branch meeting to determine roles. Branch Chairs can also divide the roles up at their discretion if they feel the above process does not assist them. All election records must be stored on the SHPA Branch Committee SharePoint, or alternately be provided by the Branch to the Secretariat for filing. Where material is sensitive it may be protected for view only by the Branch Chair and Secretariat’s primary contact for Branches.

Branch Committee election timeline (guide only, adjustments permitted to suit individual circumstances where election integrity is not affected)

	Online	Ballot at ABM
Key dates	Action	Action
8 weeks prior	Notify SHPA Secretariat (CEO) of upcoming election and format	
7 weeks prior	Announcement to eligible voters Send call for nominations (250-word statement & photo) to all Branch members	
6 weeks prior		Notify SHPA Secretariat (CEO) of upcoming election and format
5 weeks prior	Verify nominees	Announcement to eligible voters Send call for nominations (250-word statement & photo) to all Branch members
4 weeks prior	Electoral roll closes and extracted by SHPA Secretariat. Election announcement to eligible voters	
3 weeks prior	Election period (open for 10 days)	Verify nominees
1-2 weeks prior	Results ratified by SHPA Secretariat SHPA Secretariat provide results to CEO, Board and Branch Chair. Nominees not notified prior to ABM	Electoral roll closes and extracted by SHPA Secretariat. Election announcement to eligible voters
ABM	Results announced at ABM	Candidates speak at ABM Election open (30 mins) Results ratified by Branch Chair Results announced at ABM

Regulation 7. The timing of elections

7.1 Elections are held each October to enable incoming committee members to attend end-of-year activities and to ensure handover of budgeting and planning is undertaken.

Regulation 8. The composition of the Branch Executive

8.1 The Branch Executive consists of a smaller, experienced group of committee members who review information and make decisions on behalf of the committee when gaining consensus or discussion at a Branch meeting is unviable. The Executive comprises the following roles: Branch Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer and Secretary however the selection of these roles is at the discretion of the Branch Chair. The Chair can choose to have an informal ballot if they prefer. The Chair must report all Branch Executive activities to the committee at the next meeting.

At the time of announcing an upcoming election, the Executive can nominate a committee member to carry responsibility for liaising with SHPA's Secretariat in relation to the election implementation or results. This may be relevant if the Branch Chair is unavailable or seeking re-election.

Regulation 9. The office bearers of the Branch

9.1 The Branch Chair is elected by members of the Branch Committee from self-nominated members.

The appointment of other office bearers and formal responsibilities to specific Branch Committee members is at the discretion of the Branch Chair. This is to ensure the Branch Chair is supported by their committee. If the Branch Chair prefers to go to a vote for the other specific Branch roles this is also acceptable. Only the Branch Chair role is mandatory. All members of the Branch Committee must be listed on the [SHPA website](#).

Technician Representatives are elected by the Branch membership. Should the Technician Representative resign during their term, a casual appointment can be made by the Branch Chair until the next elections are held.

Positions descriptions are available for the following roles: Branch Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Vice-chair, CE Coordinator, Communications Officer, Membership Officer, and Technician Representative

Regulation 10. The role of budgets

10.1 Branch budgets of proposed expenditure are required annually for the financial year (July – June) to guide SHPA financial management. SHPA Secretariat will commence budget discussions with Branches in February with budgets due in March.

Each Branch must provide two budgets to SHPA's Secretariat;

1. [Operations budget](#) - including Branch continuing education events
2. [Symposium budget](#) - including planned education events outside regular Branch activity such as webinars or conferences

For budget purposes 'continuing education' includes all education provided to members free of charge i.e. monthly or regularly scheduled presentations and webinars. Symposiums include education events where members are charged to attend. Non-members are required to pay to attend either type of event.

Examples of budgets can be found on the Branch Committee SharePoint.

Regulation 11. The terms for which persons hold a Branch office

11.1 Apart from the Technician Representative all branch positions are appointed by the Chair. Technician Representatives are elected by the branch membership. All elected positions including Branch Chair and Technician Representative are held for three years.

At the end of a term an individual can seek re-nomination to the committee for a maximum of three (3) cycles of 3 years. Once re-elected, committee members can renominate for positions within the committee. To avoid burnout, staggered committee terms are preferred.

Branch Chairs are elected from committee members for a two-year term with other executive appointments (Secretary, Treasurer and Vice Chair) made for one year. Branch Chair can seek renomination by two-year terms unless only eligible for another single year on the Branch Committee, in which case they can have a final one-year term if their committee is agreeable. The allocation of specific responsibilities (i.e. CE Coordinator, Membership Officer) are for one year although individuals can renominate for a sequential period. All appointments must be confirmed by the incoming Branch Chair.

At the commencement of their term Branch Chairs should aim to forward plan Branch Executive (if implemented) and other appointments for the length of their term to aid succession planning.

Regulation 12. The procedure for Branch member meetings and Branch Committee meetings

12.1 Branch meetings are held as required to advance committee work. Branches are encouraged to meet monthly however this is at the discretion of the Chair.

A minimum of 4 meetings per year (excluding an Annual Branch Meeting) is required.

SHPA's Secretariat supports Branch meetings by providing resources such as the monthly Branch Report, Agenda and Minutes templates, funding for catering and meeting spaces, if required, and the attendance of a Executive Representative (observer only).

The Branch Committee meeting agenda and minutes templates include standard items for discussion: education, membership, and advocacy. As there are no legal binding decisions made at the Branch meetings, there is no committee meeting quorum required, however this can be decided at the discretion of the Chair.

To ensure transparent and effective communication all Branches are encouraged to provide Minutes to SHPA's Secretariat within a week of committee meetings. It is recommended that the Branch updates an action log of decisions after each meeting and shares this information with the Secretariat.

Branch Chairs may meet collectively via teleconferencing to discuss joint concerns and share Branch insights. SHPA's Secretariat facilitates these meetings quarterly to follow SHPA Board meetings, depending upon participant availability. If Branch Chairs wish to meet in person, any costs associated with this should be included in the Branch's annual budget.

13.2 Declaring a Conflict of Interest (COI) is applicable to SHPA office bearers, staff, and members and those acting on behalf of SHPA. They are: Board of Directors, members of the Board committees and Reference Groups, Branch office bearers, Specialty Practice Group members, SHPA staff, conference organising committees and members involved in the planning and delivery of SHPA activities.

COI arises when an individual has an actual, potential, or perceived conflict between official duties and private interests. For a comprehensive definition please see the [Conflict of Interest Policy](#). To acquire a COI form please contact [Secretariat](#).

Regulation 13. Any other matters pertaining to the regulation of the Branch

13.1 All awards presented by the Branch are funded by the Branch operational budget and should be registered with SHPA's Secretariat and align with the [SHPA Awards Framework \(2020\)](#).

13.2 All work undertaken by SHPA Branch Committees remains the property of SHPA including any intellectual property. All materials developed by Branch Committees should be saved in a shared SHPA file format accessible to future Branch Committees and SHPA's Secretariat.

Version Number	Author	Date
2.0	SHPA Secretariat	07/10/2019
2.1	SHPA Secretariat	30/09/2020