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PPA integration call

PROFESSIONAL Pharmacists Australia (PPA) has repeated its call for pharmacy to be integrated into the wider health system, following the publication of a pilot study exploring the role of GP based pharmacists.

The trial followed the employment of three non-dispensing pharmacists over a six-month period.

They had experience ranging from three to 31 years and had no prior GP experience and were employed part-time working between 15 – 16 hours per week.

The pharmacist's roles were categorised into four main groups: quality of practice, administration, medication review and patient education.

Authors concluded, “The co-location of pharmacists with GPs can enhance interprofessional communication and the development of collaborative working relationships.

“It can also reduce fragmentation of care and facilitate the delivery of patient-centred interdisciplinary chronic disease and medication management services.”

The paper was published in the *AJGP*, Vol 47, No. 8, Aug 2018 - visit racgp.org.au to access.

SHPA Uluru support

THE Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia (SHPA) has formally endorsed the *Uluru Statement from the Heart*, which seeks to enshrine a First Nations Voice within the Australian Constitution.

Guild blasts opponents

PHARMACY Guild executive director David Quilty has launched a broadside at a rising tide of opposition to pharmacist ownership of community pharmacy, classifying naysayers as either “ideologues”, “commercial opportunists” or “perennially confused”.

Writing in the Guild's fortnightly *Forefront* newsletter yesterday, Quilty said the ideologues “worship at the economic altar of the free market and unfettered ownership of all businesses,” deliberately misunderstanding the unique pharmacy market where objectives are driven by equity and quality rather than economic efficiency.

The commercial opportunists see the opening up of pharmacy ownership as an opportunity for them to make more money and wield increased market power.

And the perennially confused on one hand criticise the profit-driven retail role of community pharmacy but at the same time think the sector should be opened up to supermarkets, he said.

Quilty cited the “fervent belief that pharmacies must be owned by pharmacists” as the foundation stone of the Guild's espousal of the benefits of the Australian community pharmacy model, which he claimed ensures a “patient first” approach that underpins high levels of public trust in the profession.

“Around the country governments of all political persuasions recognise the vital role played by community pharmacies...this cross-party political support for pharmacist-only pharmacy ownership...

is because decision-makers rightly recognise that Australia's community pharmacy system works extremely well and the reason it does is because professionally trained pharmacists who are obligated to put their patients' first are directly invested in the system,” Quilty added.

He slammed a situation where “highly paid corporate lawyers and financial advisers are able to devise ever more complex arrangements in order to get around the clear and unambiguous intent of the pharmacy ownership laws.

“If there are loopholes being exploited, they need to be addressed,” Quilty concluded.

The current Qld inquiry into pharmacy ownership has seen several key submissions by major players including Chemist Warehouse (**PD** 24 Jul) and Ramsay Health Care (**PD** 06 Aug) urging a change to ownership rules.

NICE pharmacy focus

BRITAIN'S National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) has released a new guideline focusing on how community pharmacies can help maintain and improve people's physical and mental wellbeing, including those with a long-term condition.

The guidelines aim to encourage more people to use community pharmacies by integrating them within existing health and care pathways and ensuring they offer standard services and a consistent approach.

NICE says the integration requires a collaborative approach from individual pharmacies and their representatives, local authorities and other commissioners.

Recommendations relate to the role of pharmacy as a health hub, by integrating into existing care and referral pathways as well as raising awareness and providing follow-up information for patients.

Visit nice.org.uk for the guidance.

Aged care innovation

OPPORTUNITIES

for community pharmacies to collaborate and innovate in aged care was the topic of a presentation made last week to Leading Age Services Australia (LASA) by Victorian Pharmacy Guild president Anthony Tassone.

Common advocacy issues at both the state and commonwealth level were also on the agenda, as well as endorsement for an Electronic National Residential Medication Chart (NRMCM), the potential for the aged care sector to support the electronic NRMCM, and the current trial of the system under way in NSW and South Australia.

Pictured above at the meeting are, from left: Sandra Hills, ceo Benetas; Care Connect ceo Paul

Ostrowski; Anthony Tassone, Pharmacy Guild Vic president; David McConville, member representative; Veronica Jamison, Vic/Tas state manager LASA; and Nick McDonald, ceo of Prestige Inhome Care.



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Dispensary Corner

WHOM do you sit next to at work? Is your nearest office partner a male or female? Get ready to move...

The average office desk has been found to contain 400 times more germs than a toilet seat – meaning that many office workers could be at risk of sickness due to dirty desks.

But wait - there's more - compared to women, men have up to four times the bacteria in, on and around their desks, phones, computers, keyboards, drawers and personal items.

Research by the University of Arizona found that humans are the most common source of bacteria - and your mobile phone carries 10 times the bacteria found on most toilet seats.

Now, your immune system...?



BOXERS or briefs - which are better for testicular health and sperm count?

Men who wear boxer shorts have higher sperm concentrations than men who wear tighter fitting underwear, according to the largest study yet to compare how underwear impacts fertility.

The US research also showed that men who wore boxers had lower levels of follicle-stimulating hormone (FSH), compared to men who wore tight-fitting underwear.

Published in *Human Reproduction*, access the research by **CLICKING HERE**.

TGA gives valsartan all-clear

NO VALSARTAN medicines sold in Australia have been affected by an issue which has seen a number of recalls issued in Europe and the USA in recent weeks (**PD** 11 Jul).

The Therapeutic Goods Administration yesterday provided an update on the local situation, confirming that three Chinese manufacturing sites which saw the introduction of a carcinogenic impurity "have not supplied the valsartan active ingredient used in any medicine supplied in Australia".

The TGA contacted the four

companies that sponsor products containing valsartan on the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods, and has subsequently conducted additional verification to reconfirm that no impacted stock has been supplied in Australia.

"While some media headlines and articles regarding the overseas recall actions may have caused concern for Australian consumers, no medicines supplied in Australia are affected," the TGA said.

The problems in Europe and the USA related to an issue at Zhejiang Huahai Pharmaceuticals, with a manufacturing change believed to have led to the introduction of N-nitrosodimethylamine (NDMA) which is classified as a probable human carcinogen.

Rapid syphilis testing

THE Federal Health Department has launched an \$8.8m investment to provide rapid response tests for syphilis in the hope of bringing a current outbreak to a halt.

The project is targeting three high-risk regions of Northern Australia, Indigenous Health Minister Ken Wyatt said.

"These instant tests will allow people to be diagnosed on-the-spot for syphilis and given immediate treatment if needed, hopefully providing a vital circuit-breaker against the spread of the disease."

Around 10,000 instant tests have been sent to targeted areas.

Azithromycin alert

THE US Food and Drug Administration has issued a warning that the antibiotic azithromycin (brand names Zmax and Zithromax) should not be given long term to treat a lung condition in patients with cancers of the blood or lymph nodes who undergo a donor stem cell transplant.

A clinical trial found an increased rate of relapse in these patients.



Travel Specials

WELCOME to *Pharmacy Daily's* travel feature. Each week we highlight a couple of great travel deals for the pharmacy industry, brought to you by *Cruise Weekly*.

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