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## Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today has three pages of news plus a front cover wrap from Sigma Rewards.

## Pharmacy hit by second robbery

**MOOREBANK** Amcal Pharmacy in NSW has been targeted by armed robbers for the second time in less than three weeks (PD 04 Jul).

Two knife-wielding bandits threatened two staff members and a customer last Thu 18 Jul, while demanding prescription medicines.

The balaclava-wearing duo were described as "slim to medium build" and about 175cm tall.

No one was injured during the robbery and police are appealing for anyone with information to come forward.

# Price matching impacts dispensing

**PHARMACISTS** working at stores that focus on price as their key point of difference are more likely to breach dispensing protocols when dealing with requests for emergency contraceptives, research reveals.

Health economists from the Queensland University of Technology reported that secret shoppers who visited 243 pharmacies in Brisbane found pharmacists working for banner groups had a higher rate of compliance with dispensing guidelines for emergency contraceptives and conjunctivitis than those working in other stores.

The researchers found 57.6% of pharmacists complied with dispensing guidelines, when providing emergency hormonal contraceptives and over-the-counter conjunctivitis treatments.

Secret shoppers were engaged as part of the study and given set scripts to use when seeking emergency contraception, with

one group seeking the medicine within 24 hours of engaging in unprotected sex, while a second group was to report having unprotected sex more than 72 hours prior to seeking an emergency contraceptive.

The study found that pharmacy staff followed guidelines in the first instance, however, almost half of pharmacists provided emergency contraceptives in the second scenario, despite guidelines recommending that pharmacists should not dispense it, but refer the patient to their GP.

The authors suggested that pharmacists may be "influenced by information transfers in social interactions and by the psychology and emotional state of others", quoting a secret shopper who had reported being in the second group.

"The pharmacist was initially not going to supply it, because of the time elapsed, however, after I said I didn't mind, whatever they recommended they then sold it to



me because it was a Friday and she was worried I wouldn't be able to get to the GP," the shopper said.

When it came to providing OTC conjunctivitis treatments, pharmacists were more likely to comply with guidelines when the first in-store interaction with the patient was with them, rather than with a pharmacy assistant, the researchers found.

The study was published in *JAMA Network Open*.

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## Medicines policy outdated

**AUSTRALIA'S** National Medicines Policy (NMP) is "outdated and needing review," according to an article published today by the *Medical Journal of Australia*.

Associate Professor Orin Chisholm, Program Director of Pharmaceutical Medicine at the University of NSW and colleague Dr Brendan Shaw, wrote that a broad review of the NMP - developed in 1999 in a collaboration between the government, the pharmaceutical industry, consumers and health care professionals - had never been undertaken.

are nothing like they were back in 1999," they said.

"The NMP should be comprehensively reviewed with a brief to involve all stakeholders in the medicines system in a broad consultation process."

Key factors such as disruptive innovation, precision medicine and climate change should be considered in any review, along with pharmaceutical waste disposal and environmental protection, management and disposal of unsafe and unwanted medicines, antimicrobial resistance, IT, data analysis, intellectual property and more - see [mja.com.au](http://mja.com.au).

## Health Minister to open PSA19

**FEDERAL** Health Minister, Greg Hunt, will officially open the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia's (PSA) national conference PSA19 in Sydney on Fri 26 Jul (**PD** breaking news Fri).

PSA National President, Dr Chris Freeman, said that the PSA had an excellent working relationship with Minister Hunt and the Coalition Government and was very pleased that he accepted the invitation to speak at PSA19.

"The Government has made many commitments to PSA, most notably declaring medicine safety a National Health Priority Area and announcing that PSA would be a signatory to the upcoming 7th Community Pharmacy Agreement (7CPA)," he said.



"We look forward to Minister Hunt speaking on these topics and more broadly on how the pharmacy profession can work with Government on improving the health outcomes of all Australians."

The theme of PSA19 is 'Pharmacists in 2023: unlocking your opportunities'.

Visit [psa19.com](http://psa19.com) for more.

## Need some travel ideas?

Travel & Cruise Weekly

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## Pharmacist pings dodgy doctor



A UK doctor was caught prescribing inappropriately by a hospital pharmacist at Broomfield Hospital in Chelmsford in Mar last year, according to a finding by the UK Medical Practitioners Tribunal Service.

The doctor was working as a locum when he wrote fake prescriptions for oestradiol and progesterone for a family friend, a woman aged 55-60, in the name of a patient chosen at random from the hospital database.

The pharmacist noticed that the patient he'd prescribed oestradiol for, had attended the hospital's midwifery clinic the month before.

The same pharmacist also queried another script, as the second patient had not attended the hospital ED for five months.

The practitioner was dismissed immediately by the hospital and the Tribunal deregistered him saying he was "unsafe" to practice.

For more, see [mpts-uk.org](http://mpts-uk.org).

## Meds reconciliation

A **NEW** report by the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care has identified key issues around the fact that there are limited opportunities for medication reconciliation during transitions of care - [CLICK HERE](#).

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## Dispensary Corner

**HAVE** you ever had a customer come into your store who was argumentative to the point where you just wanted someone else to deal with them?

Well one US pharmacy worker decided to get the police involved because she didn't like the tone a patient took when interacting with a colleague.

Last Mon (15 Jul), Kendriana Washington, a freelance writer from Tulsa, Oklahoma, went to a drive-thru CVS pharmacy to pick up a prescription for an unspecified chronic condition, when her bank card failed to go through, which is a little awkward, a bit like when airport security informs you they would like a closer inspection of your bag.

The cashier tried a couple more times, before telling Washington she didn't have enough money to pay.

Confident in her accounting skills, and irritated by the suggestion she couldn't afford her medicines, Washington went to an in-store ATM (using the same card), and withdrew cash to pay for the script.

That's when things got a little heated. The cashier's manager moved to calm any tension, only for Washington to say, "I don't want to hear your excuses and I do not accept your apology. Just get my prescription so I can leave. Here's the money".

The manager took exception to Washington's tone and then she called the cops, to which Washington took out her phone to video the 911 call.

## Polypharm WHO

THE World Health Organization (WHO) has asked countries and key stakeholders to prioritise medication safety in polypharmacy as part of a commitment to effective use of medicines - see [who.int](http://who.int).



## Weekly Comment

Welcome to Pharmacy Daily's weekly comment feature. This week's contributor is John Guy, PDL's Professional Officer.



## Minimising risk in RACF's

**BASED** on PDL reporting data, approximately 10% of all incidents involve a Dose Administration Aid (DAA), with many relating to residential aged care facilities (RACF).

Risks associated with DAA supply may be increased for RACF clients. Residents are typically of an older demographic with multiple conditions and medications. DAA dosing is undertaken by various facility staff which can reduce error detection through a lack of familiarity with the regular medicines. Also, there is typically an absence of direct pharmacist interaction with clients.

Other considerations regarding medication safety include difficulties requesting and receiving current medicine profiles and prescriptions from prescribers. Hence, medicine changes initiated in hospital or the RACF may not be effectively communicated to the pharmacy or instituted in a timely manner.

PDL urges pharmacists providing DAAs to have reliable procedures in place to ensure profiles and prescriptions are checked on a regular basis for currency and accuracy. Furthermore, any dosing changes are to be documented in a manner that ensures the prescriber is informed the changes have been implemented.

The other common incident is a packing error. There are a range of error types. However PDL's advice is that a consistent and thorough checking process against the medicine profile is most reliable as a means to reduce this risk.

## Friendly pharmacist honoured

**DIABETES** NSW & ACT has awarded its most prestigious honour, the Sir Kempson Maddox Award, to former Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) National President and Life Fellow, John "the friendly pharmacist" Bell (pictured).

The award, established in honour of the organisation's founder, acknowledges people who have made a significant contribution to the diabetes movement.

PSA NSW Branch President, Professor Peter Carroll, said the award was further recognition of John's extensive contribution not only to the pharmacy profession but the broader healthcare system.

"Since establishing the community pharmacy John Bell Pharmacist Advice in Woollahra in 1969, John has been working to not only improve the health of his local community, but also advocating for better national and international approaches to healthcare," Professor Carroll said.

Bell was made a Member of the Order of Australia in 1993 for services to pharmacy and



in 2017 he was awarded PSA's Lifetime Achievement Award for his contribution to the pharmacy profession and the Australian and international communities.

"John has taken an active role in international pharmacy for more than 30 years, including eight years as Vice President of the Federation Internationale Pharmaceutique (FIP)," Carroll said.

"In 2004 he received FIP's highest honour, the Andre Bedat Award for services to international pharmacy practice" (PD 05 Sep 18).

Bell currently works in his pharmacy and teaches at the Graduate School of Health at the University of Technology, Sydney.

## Win with LA CLINICA

This week Pharmacy Daily and LA CLINICA are giving readers the chance to win the baby kit pictured, valued at over \$60.

Australian made "Organic For Baby" by LA CLINICA is formulated with certified organic and safe ingredients to care for baby's delicate skin. The Bath & Body Gift Set contains full-sized Soothing Lotion, Soap-Free Wash Gel, Nappy Wipe Lotion and Zinc Barrier Balm. No artificial ingredients or artificial fragrances. Visit [www.laclinica.com](http://www.laclinica.com) for more.



To win, be the first from NSW or ACT to send the correct answer to the question to [comp@pharmacydaily.com.au](mailto:comp@pharmacydaily.com.au)

**Where is LA CLINICA Organic For Baby made?**

Check here tomorrow for today's winner.