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GP vax incident “regretful”: RACGP

THE alleged administration of expired and inappropriately stored doses of vaccinations to patients by two Sydney GPs is being described as “regretful” by the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners.

The College has reminded GPs of the importance of managing vaccines correctly, following the revelation that thousands of patients may have received ineffective flu, measles mumps and rubella and other vaccinations on the National Immunisation Program.

RACGP President, Harry Nespolon, noted that the College’s Standards for general practice (5th edition) advice - GP Standard 6.1 Maintaining vaccine potency, explained the need to keep vaccines within an optimal temperature range.

“The RACGP finds this isolated



incident regretful and understands patients’ concerns and dismay,” he said.

“As such, we will be running an article in our publications reminding our members of their obligations and the practical measures for storing vaccinations appropriately.”

Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) National President, Dr Chris Freeman (pictured),

said the case highlighted the importance of correct storage and auditing of vaccines.

“The recent incident involving two Sydney GPs is concerning not only for the people involved, as they may not be protected from the diseases they were vaccinated against but for the broader community,” he said.

“Any reduction in effective vaccinations has the potential to decrease herd immunity.”

Dr Freeman added that community pharmacy has been a leader in cold chain storage for decades, and has robust procedures for cold-chain maintenance, “which is why stories like this are not evident within the community pharmacy environment”.

“Patients can be assured that vaccines administered within community pharmacy have been appropriately stored,” he said.

Meds fast-tracks

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has updated information around fast track approval pathways for prescription medicines.

The purpose of the fast track pathways is to get prescription medicines that treat serious and life-threatening conditions to patients earlier than normal, the TGA says.

Examples include cancers, stroke, HIV and some rare inherited disorders.

Two new fast-track processes have been implemented: priority review of prescription medicines enables approval up to three months earlier, and provisional approval allows for the approval of some medicines for a limited time while more information about them is collected - tga.gov.au.

Pharmacists key role in assisted dying

HOSPITAL pharmacists will have a crucial role in the preparation, storage and management of medicines to facilitate the implementation of the Voluntary Assisted Dying Act in Victoria.

The Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia (SHPA) CEO, Kristin Michaels, said the Victorian Government had entrusted pharmacists to oversee the complex processes involved.

“As practitioners with unique medicines management

experience in the challenging environments of acute and palliative care, it is fitting hospital pharmacists are at the frontline supporting the dignified and respectful implementation of this service,” Michaels said.

Under the Act, terminally ill Victorians will be able to make an initial request to access the service through the Voluntary Assisted Dying Board, which will review their case.

The SHPA has no public position on assisted dying.

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Govs urged to be AWaRe

GOVERNMENTS around the world are being encouraged to adopt the AWaRe tool developed by the World Health Organization (WHO) Essential Medicines List, to reduce the spread of antimicrobial resistance.

Launching the tool, which classifies antibiotics into three categories - **Access, Watch and Reserve** - on Tue 18 Jun, the WHO noted that 50% of antibiotics in most countries were used inappropriately to treat viruses.

WHO Director General, Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, warned the spread of resistant gram-negative bacteria, was "one of the more urgent health risks of our time", adding it "threatens to undo a century of medical progress".

"All countries must strike a balance between ensuring access to life-saving antibiotics and slowing drug resistance by reserving the use of some antibiotics for the hardest-to-treat infections," he said.

"I urge countries to adopt AWaRe,



which is a valuable and practical tool for doing just that."

WHO Assistant-Director General for Access to Medicines, Dr Mariangela Simao, warned the lack of investment in new antibiotics had created "an invisible pandemic".

"We are already starting to see signs of a post-antibiotic era, with the emergence of infections that are untreatable by all classes of antibiotics," she said.

"We must safeguard these precious last-line antibiotics to ensure we can still treat and prevent serious infections."

Pharmacy owner's rego ban

A **WESTERN** Australian pharmacy owner has been disqualified from reapplying for professional registration for six months after being convicted of illegally importing "ice-pipes".

A State Administrative Tribunal heard Hoang-Nam Nguyen, imported a total of 2,001 ice-pipes into Australia from China and India, in 2014, resulting in him being charged on three counts of offences contrary to the Customs Act 1901.

At the time Nguyen owned a pharmacy, and was the director of a business that owned and managed a "smoke and accessories store".

In 2016, the Magistrates Court of WA convicted Nguyen of the offences and he was ordered to pay a \$60,000 fine (**PD** 13 Sep 16).

Following the conviction, the Pharmacy Board of Australia referred the matter to the Tribunal.



Nguyen admitted the illegal importation of the drug paraphernalia constituted professional misconduct and he was reprimanded by the Board and disqualified from re-applying for registration as a pharmacist for six months.

He was ordered to pay \$1,000 towards the Board's costs.

The Board noted Nguyen was remorseful and contrite.



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SHPA new Standards of Practice

THE Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia (SHPA) has released the first of its new Standards of Practice, a series of "revised guidelines on optimal clinical practice and operations of hospital pharmacy services," which focuses on Pain Management and



appears in the latest issue of the *Journal of Pharmacy Practice and Research (JPPR)*.

SHPA Chief Executive, Kristin Michaels, says the publication of SHPA's Standard of Practice in Pain Management for Pharmacy Services kicks off the progressive release of new and updated guides, which draw on decades of expertise and experience held by Leadership Committee members across SHPA's 25 Specialty Practice streams.

"SHPA's Standard of Practice series is widely utilised and well-referenced by pharmacists and health professionals seeking guidance on the delivery of clinical, operational and specialty hospital pharmacy services."

Michaels said.

"In partnership with some of our most influential members, supported by our Specialty Practice model, SHPA is undertaking a comprehensive review and expansion of the crucial series with enhancements relevant to current practice.

"This is meticulous work and we are proud to see the result of 18 months of consultation and revision culminate in this Pain Management standard, with Standards of Practice in Emergency Management, General Medicine, Geriatric Medicine, Oncology and Haematology and Nephrology next in the development pipeline."

The new standard includes information about staffing ratios, consideration of patient factors for commencing treatment and discussion of emerging practice such as opioid stewardship.

Visit shpa.org.au to access the new Standard of Practice.

Vitamin D fails heart-help test

NEW research investigating more than 83,000 patients has revealed that vitamin D probably won't lower risk of heart attack or stroke.

Published in *JAMA Cardiology*, US and Israeli researchers meta-analysed data from 21

randomised clinical trials, including three Australian studies, to reach their conclusions that "vitamin D supplementation may not confer cardiovascular protection and may not be indicated for this purpose" - jamanetwork.com.



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Jobs of the Week

- **Pharmacist in Charge** - Coffs Coastline, NSW (Job# 200032516)
Rare opportunity to join this team; long weekend/fortnight and market salary.
- **Pharmacist Manager** - Central Coast, QLD (Job# 200032689)
Align with this forward thinking, vibrant group and see your career soar.
- **Pharmacist** - Eyre Peninsula, SA (Job# 200032701)
Accommodation (includes electricity); Supportive team; Coastal lifestyle.

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Dispensary Corner

GOOD news for personal hygiene - pop star Justin Bieber has launched a campaign to get more young people to wear deodorant.

Of course it's a "collaboration" with US manufacturer Schmidt's Natural Deodorant, which has announced a deal with the "My World 2.0" artist to promote a new cruelty-free product called Here+Now.

The company cited a new poll which found that more than 30% of 18 to 24 year-olds have not used deodorant in the last four weeks - so no wonder their bedrooms are a bit stinky.

Bieber announced the partnership via Instagram (below) showing he's ready and willing for a bit of roll-on.



A CREATIVE teenager arrested for speeding in Canada last week explained his high velocity by telling officers he urgently needed to get to a bathroom.

The 16-year-old was clocked by the Canadian Mounted Police driving his Camaro at about 160km an hour, after he had eaten "too many hot wings".

They had little sympathy for his predicament, levying a \$966 fine for speeding and another \$203 for driving without a supervising driver.

Australia outweighs USA



CMA stand delegates with Aussie mascots

COMPLEMENTARY Medicines Australia (CMA) has this week hosted the largest international pavilion at China HealthPlex 2019, out doing the United States of America for its pavillion stand size.

Australia has now grown to be the largest exporter of complementary medicines to China.

The Australian stand is showcasing 18 Aussie brands including Swisse Wellness and

Blackmores.

China's Healthplex Expo, held this year in Shanghai 19-21 Jun, is one of the largest health expos in the country, attracting more than 1,800 global exhibitors and anticipating more than 100,000 visitors.

Products on display are in four categories: health food, traditional Chinese medicine, beauty products and health care.

See more at hncexpo.com.

Win with John Plunkett

Everyday this week Pharmacy Daily and Plunkett's are giving away the John Plunkett Dark Spot Eraser and Facial Cleanser.

John Plunkett Dark Spot Eraser is a concentrated serum with Eventone Complex™ - a blend of multiple actives to visibly lighten dark spots and boost your skin's health and radiance, plus it's easy to incorporate into your daily skincare routine with guaranteed results. RRP \$39.95. Visit: www.JohnPlunkett.com.au for more.

To win, be the first from VIC or TAS to send the correct answer to the question to comp@pharmacydaily.com.au

Name one other John Plunkett Cosmeceutical product.

Congratulations to yesterday's winner, Samantha Higham.



Botanix success

LISTED dermatology cannabis company Botanix has announced its psoriasis Phase 1b study has demonstrated anti-inflammatory and cell modulating activity of cannabidiol - see asx.com.au.

Events Calendar

WELCOME to *Pharmacy Daily's* events calendar, opportunities to earn CPE and CPD points.

If you have an upcoming event you'd like us to feature, email info@pharmacydaily.com.au.

28 - 30 Jun: ConPharm 2019; Pullman on the Park Melbourne; for details see: www.aacp.com.au

26 - 28 Jul: PSA19; Hyatt Regency Sydney; registrations now open: www.psa19.com

04 - 07 Aug: Medici Capital Pharmacy Snow Business Conference 2019; Mt Buller, Victoria; register your interest here: www.medicicom.au

05 - 07 Sep: Pharmacy Connect; Hilton Hotel, Sydney; for details and to register visit: www.pharmacyconnect.com.au

11 - 13 Oct: Pharmacy Assistant National Conference; Sofitel Brisbane Central; for more info and to register see: www.pharmacyassistants.com