

### Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today has three pages of news plus a full page from Sigma Rewards.

## Vic hospital pharmacy intern funding

SIX rural and regional hospitals across Victoria have been granted additional pharmacist intern position funding from 2020, in partnership with Vic's Department of Health and Human Services.

The successful applicants include South West Healthcare Warrnambool in partnership with Colac Area Health; Bass Coast Health, Wonthaggi; Ballarat Health Services in partnership with Djerriwarrh Health Services; Goulburn Valley Health Shepparton; and Echuca Regional Health.

Society of Hospital Pharmacists CEO Kristin Michaels said a total of 18 applications were received, and while funding was only available for five extra positions in 2020, a further five will be added in 2021.

"The standard of expressions of interest was very strong, which bodes well for pharmacy education and internship support in Victoria," she said.

The Department will provide approximately 60% of pharmacy intern salaries for 85 positions across Victorian public hospitals, expanding to 100 by 2023, through its Allied Health Workforce Training and Development Grant.

Unsuccessful applicants were encouraged to apply again for the next tranche of funded positions, which commence in 2021.

An information session for pharmacy students seeking hospital pharmacy internships for 2020 will be held at Collingwood Town Hall on Wed 29 May.

More information at [shpa.org.au](http://shpa.org.au).

## Vax "a lost opportunity"

PHARMACISTS are missing out by not providing vaccination services, University of Technology Sydney Community Pharmacy Barometer expert panel member, John Montgomery, says.

Speaking at the launch of the 2018 UTS Pharmacy Barometer, Montgomery expressed dismay that only three out of five pharmacies across Australia have started to provide vaccination services.

"More than 40% of pharmacies not providing vaccinations is an opportunity lost," he said.

Former Pharmaceutical Society of Australia President, Warwick Plunkett, added: "it's surprising more pharmacies haven't taken greater steps to get involved".

"Could it be a case of hype versus hope?" he asked.

The Barometer found that while two-in-five stores had yet to offer services, more than two million Australians received an influenza vaccination in a pharmacy in 2017, with pharmacies that provided vaccination services averaging 58.5 flu jabs a week at an average fee of \$21.20.

Pharmacies in the ACT, NT, Queensland and Victoria, reported providing 2.8 pertussis-containing shots a week, with a charge of \$38.80 each, while pharmacies in

Queensland and the NT reported providing an average of 0.7 measles, mumps and rubella jabs a week, for \$18.60.

When asked if they would like to see the range of permitted vaccinations expanded, 60% of pharmacists said yes, with a further 26% unsure and just 14% saying they did not want to add to the vaccines available in pharmacies.

"This presents a profitable business opportunity for pharmacies whilst diversifying the role of the pharmacist," Montgomery said.

Pharmacists expressed a desire to be permitted to administer vaccines on the Childhood Immunisation Schedule, travel vaccinations, tetanus and human papillomavirus vaccine, Gardasil, among others.

## AMR matters - report

THE latest and most comprehensive report on antimicrobial resistance (AMR) has found that antimicrobial use in the community is falling, but they continue to be overprescribed, with around 41.5% of Australians prescribed at least one antibiotic during 2017.

*Antimicrobial Use and Resistance in Australia 2019: Third Australian report on antimicrobial use and resistance in human health (AURA 2019)*, released by the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care yesterday, highlights the main bacteria proving resistant.

AMR shows little sign of abating with common pathogens such as E. coli, Salmonella, Neisseria gonorrhoeae and Neisseria meningitidis becoming increasingly resistant to major drug classes, and some organisms resistant to last-resort treatments.

**CLICK HERE** to access the report.

## New ACT Health EBA

A NEW Health Professionals Enterprise Agreement (HPEA) is set to be introduced by ACT Health after a staff vote supported by 91% of respondents.

Union group Professional Pharmacists Australia said a new classification structure would help address issues with attracting and keeping talented pharmacists "firmly in the ACT health system".

## Another Guardian satisfaction win

GUARDIAN Pharmacy has come out on top for the second month in a row in the retail pharmacy section of the Roy Morgan Customer Satisfaction Awards for Mar 2019.

Guardian maintained its 93% satisfaction rating, ahead of Priceline Pharmacy in second spot.

TerryWhite Chemmart came in third place, while Discount Drug Stores dropped to fourth position, ahead of Chemist Warehouse which was fifth.



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## Instigo celebrates excellence



**MORE** than 100 delegates gathered in Melbourne last week for Instigo's ninth annual Pharmacy Catalyst Conference.

Themed "Excellence in Independence," the event featured keynote speakers Roger Simpson, Lisa McInnes-Smith and Joyce McSwan, with participants also including Guild Pharmacy of the Year winners Flannery's Pharmacy.

"It was another successful conference bringing our like-minded members together to share and innovate and more importantly celebrate the success of our group," said Pharmacy Catalyst spokesperson, Nicole Hooley.

The agenda included a range of informative and inspiring topics, including 'Retail Insights', 'The Importance of Personalisation', 'Innovation within the healthcare industry' and 'Leading your team to excellence'.

The event wrapped up with

## ARCS presentations

**THE** TGA presentations from the ARCS Australian Pharmacovigilance Regulatory Requirements and Risk Management Plans Summit conducted on 27 Mar 2019 have been posted on the TGA website.

Five session presentations covering pharmacovigilance inspections, safety update reports, adverse event management, risk minimisation and risk management plan compliance monitoring.

Access presentations at [tga.gov.au](http://tga.gov.au).

dinner at the MCG stadium, where a number of award winners were named including **Miller's Pharmacy** (Customer Engagement Pharmacy of the Year); **Gulgong Pharmacy** (Apotex Pharmacy of the Year); **Michael O'Reilly Pharmacy** (Chemists' Own Pharmacy of the Year); **Coolman Court Pharmacy** (EasyClinic Professional Services of the Year) and **Flannery's Pharmacy** (Pharmacy Catalyst Pharmacy of the Year).

Individuals awarded included **Fiona Martin** from Miller's Pharmacy who was Retail Manager of the Year; and Peter Crothers from Towers Drug Co. Bourke as Pharmacist of the Year.

Instigo GM Andrew Pattinson and Nicole Hooley are **pictured** presenting the Pharmacy of the Year award to the Flannery's Pharmacy team.

## MA hails ALP pledge

**PROPOSED** Labor Party reforms to the Research and Development Tax Incentive to boost collaboration between private enterprises, universities and science agencies, have been welcomed by Medicines Australia.

MA CEO Liz de Somer said Australia's pharmaceutical research capacity, and also hailed the appointment of former Chief Scientist, Professor Ian Chubb, as leader of a proposed "root and branch review" of Australia's research sector.

## Queensland's low vax rate

**QUEENSLAND** is dragging the chain when it comes to vaccination rates, with the Sunshine Coast and Gold Coast hinterlands having the worst childhood vaccination rates in the state, according to the Australian Immunisation Register.

*The Age* reported that five local areas all in the south-eastern pocket of the state had vaccination rates below 90% for five-year-olds.

Just 86.7% of five-year-old children were fully vaccinated in the Gold Coast hinterland, and 88.8% in the Sunshine Coast hinterland.

Surfers Paradise also recorded a low 88.9% vaccination rate.

The inner Brisbane area, encompassing the CBD, New Farm and Fortitude Valley, also had one of the lowest immunisation rates for five-year-olds with just 89.6% being fully immunised.

Qld Health Communicable

Diseases Branch Executive Director Heidi Carroll said anti-vaccination claims were based on poorly conducted studies that have been discredited or disproven, such as claiming jabs cause SIDS or autism.

"These claims are entirely baseless, irresponsible and dangerous, leaving children exposed unnecessarily to dangerous organisms," she said.

Carroll said it was important to dispel these myths and optimise vaccination rates.

"When 95% of the community is vaccinated against a disease, we reach herd immunity, which means we have the best chance to control transmission for most vaccine preventable diseases."

Far North Queensland had some of the highest rates of vaccination coverage in the state at around 98% in Charters Towers, Ayr and Ingham, all around Townsville.

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## Dispensary Corner

**IT LOOKS** like legalising marijuana in the freedom-loving US city of Denver, Colorado was just the thin end of the wedge, with citizens set to vote on a new measure which would decriminalise use of magic mushrooms.

The proposal, if accepted, would mean officials could no longer "spend resources to impose criminal penalties" for personal use and possession of the mushrooms which contain the psychedelic chemical, psilocybin.

Denver led the US in legitimising marijuana use in 2005, before the rest of Colorado followed.

If the referendum is passed, the personal use and possession of magic mushrooms would become the city's "lowest law enforcement priority".

The move is being promoted by a group called Decriminalise Denver, which claims the illicit drug may help in the treatment of cluster headaches, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder.

**A VICTORIAN** drug smuggler's illegal plans have been thrown into disarray by a courier company which delivered his package to the wrong address.

An elderly couple in Werribee, west of Melbourne, had a surprise delivery last week, after signing for a package which arrived at their house containing about \$10 million worth of methamphetamine.

They called the police straight away, who tracked down the alleged drug offender who was arrested in nearby Bundoora and charged with importing a commercial quantity of the drug.

## Pharmacist/GP harmony

**PHARMACISTS** and general practitioners enjoy largely constructive relationships, the University of Technology Sydney (UTS) Pharmacy Barometer reveals.

The annual pharmacist sentiment survey found that 91% of pharmacists felt they have a good relationship with the main prescribing GP in their area.

Most pharmacists felt GPs were receptive to their suggestions about prescribing changes and clinical recommendations, however, they felt that GPs were rarely proactive in seeking them out for advice.

Speaking at the launch of the 2018 Pharmacy Barometer, former Pharmaceutical Society of Australia President, Warwick Plunkett, said results indicated that pharmacists were not front of mind for GPs.

He said the mostly one-sided relationship meant pharmacists were not proactively sought out by the GP in a clinical area, but their advice when given, usually in conjunction with an issue, was generally acceptable to the GP.

"Probably what that means is the GPs don't think much about the pharmacist," Plunkett said.

Meanwhile, the majority of pharmacists (56%) supported the integration of pharmacists into GP surgeries, with support highest among employee pharmacists (77%), UTS Head of Pharmacy, Professor Kylie Williams said.

Pharmacy owners were the least likely to back the idea (41%) - significantly down from the 65% supporting GP integration in 2015.

"One of the things [influencing pharmacy owners' attitudes] is that community pharmacies are having difficulties recruiting pharmacists, so maybe they want them working for us rather than in a GP surgery," Williams said.

While most pharmacists were supportive of the idea of having a pharmacist integrated in GP surgeries, just 16% thought GPs would be supportive of the idea, with a third saying their medical peers would not want to have a pharmacist within their practice.



## 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 *Travel & Cruise Weekly*.

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