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## RMMR caps restricting pharmacists

**REGULATORY** barriers capping the frequency at which pharmacists can review aged care residents' medications need to be changed to boost patient safety, the Royal Commission into *Aged Care Quality and Safety Interim Report* recommends.

The 272-page report called on the Federal Government, Pharmacy Guild of Australia and Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) to lift the cap on funding for Residential Medication Management Reviews (RMMRs) in the Seventh Community Pharmacy Agreement (7CPA).

The report cited the findings of the 2017 *Review of National Aged Care Quality Regulatory Processes* by former ACT Chief Minister and pharmacist, Kate Carnell, and Professor Ron Paterson, who had called for RMMRs to be conducted on a patient's admission into an aged care facility and after any hospitalisation, significant deterioration or change in

medication regimen.

The Royal Commission Interim Report also suggested fresh subsidies should be provided to support pharmacists in the aged care sector.

PSA National President, Dr Chris Freeman, welcomed the report's recommendations.

"There is no doubt that the absence of regular pharmacist services in aged care facilities is causing harm," he said.

"When you don't have the right level of investment in pharmacists, this is the outcome which results.

"Pharmacists are well aware of these problems.

"PSA members have told us they feel hand-cuffed by the lack of funding and regulatory barriers which prevent them from protecting residents from the harms caused when medicines are not used in a safe and effective way," Freeman said.

The report also noted evidence highlighted during the hearing that



"service provision for RMMR has eroded markedly over the past years", a point that was echoed in the Commonwealth Department of Health's annual report (*PD* 29 Oct).

Guild National President, George Tambassis, also voiced support for the report.

"We stand ready to take part in the proposed review of RMMRs with the aim of ensuring rules and eligibility requirements for these medication reviews are designed for the best possible health outcomes for aged care residents," he said.

### Today's issue of *PD*

*Pharmacy Daily* today has three pages of news plus full pages from:

- eze Allergy
- MIMS Monthly Update

### *PD's* Summer Spotlight

**ENSURE** your products are beach-ready by booking a slot in *Pharmacy Daily's* Summer Spotlight feature which will launch on Tue 12 Nov, with spots still available for suppliers to showcase products and offers for the upcoming holiday season.

Each insertion includes an image, a brief description and a call to action.

To secure your place and maximise your brand's pharmacy profile in this special feature, call 1300 799 220 or email [advertising@pharmacydaily.com.au](mailto:advertising@pharmacydaily.com.au).

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## TWC corporate flu shot vouchers

**TERRYWHITE** Chemmart (TWC) has launched its 2020 Corporate Flu Program, urging corporate partners to take up the fight against loss of productivity in the workplace.

Under the program, corporate partners receive coded flu vaccination vouchers to distribute to their employees, with employers only paying for vouchers redeemed.

Employees simply book their appointment online at [terrywhitechemmart.com.au](http://terrywhitechemmart.com.au) and enter their unique code to receive the vaccination at a time and location convenient to them at participating pharmacies - see below.

## Avoid falling foul of wage laws: RSM

**PHARMACY** owners and managers are being encouraged by business consultancy and accountancy firm, RSM, to pay close attention to their obligations to employees in the wake of recent pay scandals, including Woolworths' \$300 million underpayment.

RSM Pharmacy Services Manager, Daniel Morrow, told **Pharmacy Daily** that businesses could reduce their risk of non-compliance by implementing award interpretation software, which updates automatically with every Fair Work change.

"Given the recent high-profile cases of the underpayment of staff, it is imperative that pharmacy owners give serious consideration to their obligations to employees," he said.

"Due to the complexities surrounding the interpretation of modern awards, we are suggesting

our clients utilise cloud-based workforce management software packages.

"These packages are generally low-cost and if used correctly, can provide comfort to know that you are meeting pharmacy industry standards surrounding pay-rates and rostering."

Morrow said the introduction of the Australian Taxation Office's (ATO's) Single Touch Payroll (STP) system had placed additional requirements on pharmacy owners and managers to stay on top of their employees' wages.

"This enforces employers to report on all payroll data in real-time," he said.

"So the pressure is now on pharmacy owners and managers to keep up to date on the processing of wages and payments.

"Since the adoption of STP, we have seen the ATO put additional pressure on owners to meet



employee superannuation obligations so this should be front-of-mind for all owners."

Morrow urged owners and managers to seek support from their legal or accounting advisor if they have any concerns.

"In the event that underpayments are identified, it is imperative to take action immediately to rectify the situation – the risk associated with leaving this issue unresolved could not be greater for owners," he said.

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## Sigma in talks with CWH

**PHARMACY** wholesaler, Sigma Healthcare, has confirmed it is in talks with the My Chemist/Chemist Warehouse group (CWH).

In a statement to the Australian Securities Exchange (ASX) Sigma said the discount group had approached the company in relation to the resumption of supply of fast moving consumer goods.

The announcement came less than two months after Sigma CEO told investors that the previous supply deal with CWH no longer made commercial sense - with Symbion winning the tender to be "exclusive third party distributor of pharmaceutical products" to the discount group in Jul 2018, starting from 01 Jul 2019.

In the statement to the ASX Sigma stressed "there is no certainty these negotiations will result in an agreement being reached between the parties".

## Three year ban for gamble gone wrong

A NSW-BASED pharmacist has had his registration cancelled and barred from seeking to rejoin the profession for three years, after a six-month, \$600,000, losing streak prompted him to accept an offer to supply schedule 4 (S4) medicines from the boot of his car at Sydney's Star Casino.

Jason Nguyen was found guilty of professional misconduct by the Civil and Administrative Tribunal of NSW, for his role in

the supply of more than 68,000 tablets of S4 medicines between Jul 2015 and Nov 2016.

The Tribunal also heard that Nguyen had dispensed prescription medications, including S8 products, to a number of patients over extended periods starting in 2010.

Cancelling his registration the Tribunal recommended that he maintain membership of the PSA.



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## Cannabis adverts

**THE** Therapeutic Good Administration has issued special guidance for companies wishing to advertise medicinal cannabis products to health professionals - see [tga.gov.au](http://tga.gov.au).



## Weekly Comment

Welcome to Pharmacy Daily's weekly comment feature. This week's contributor is **Rachelle Frain, GM, myPak Solutions.**



## Ready for Australia's demographic tsunami opportunity?

**BETWEEN** 1998 and 2018, the number of Australians aged 65 years and over increased from 12.2% to 15.7%.<sup>1</sup> This number is set to explode, with Australian and New Zealanders aged over 60 expected to increase by 92.6% between 2019 and 2050. This growth rate is far higher than North America and Europe<sup>2</sup>.

Recent decades have also seen a strong trend of older people choosing to live independently, from around 24 % in 1990 to 37 % in 2010.<sup>3</sup> Television footage aired in 2018 revealed how some Australians in aged care were badly mistreated, prompting many to rethink their future health care arrangements. More will likely choose independent living.

Today, over a million Australians take 5 or more medications daily. This estimate is low - it doesn't account for over the counter, complementary medicines or private prescriptions.

Are Australian pharmacies ready to support them? I believe our pharmacists can lead the way in supporting the elderly, especially those on multiple medications.

DAA services are an increasingly important part of pharmacy professional services.

Next Monday, I'll explain how myPakSolutions leading Australian end-to-end DAA solution helps pharmacists support the elderly on polypharmacy.

Meanwhile, call us with any queries on 1800 812 649.

References available on request.

## Novartis scoops Sigma awards



**NOVARTIS** Australia was presented with the Sigma Supplier of the Year award for the second year in a row, at a gala industry event held at the National Gallery in Melbourne last week.

In front of pharmaceutical industry leaders and members of Sigma's Board, Sigma Healthcare's Chief Executive Officer Mark Hooper presented the award to Denys Patterson of Novartis, recognising the company's "sustained commitment to excellence in supporting Sigma, its pharmacy brand members and improving patient engagement across Australia".

In addition, Novartis was also awarded the 2019 Wholesale Ethicals Supplier of the Year at the awards ceremony.

Bayer was awarded the National

Retail Supplier of the Year award and Medicinal Supplier of the Year.

Other 2019 winners recognised at the event included Abbott Nutrition, a2, APSS, Wellcom Worldwide, Galderma, Sanofi and Colgate-Palmolive.

Funds were also raised at the gala event for the Summer Foundation, Sigma's charity partner, with Hooper presenting a cheque for \$35,420 at the end of the event.

The CEO also acknowledged suppliers who this month donated health products worth more than \$60,000 to the drought and fire ravaged communities of Tenterfield NSW and Warwick a& Stanthorpe in Queensland.

**Pictured** with Mark Hooper above left, are Dalia Mendoza and Denys Patterson from Novartis, and Sigma Retail Pharmacy EGM, Jeff Sells.

## No doubting benefits of NIP: Meds Aus

**A NEW** report released by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) has revealed a 31% reduction in the burden of vaccine preventable diseases between 2005 and 2015.

The AIHW noted that there was a significant decline in the burden of diseases that had been added to the National Immunisation Program (NIP).

Medicines Australia CEO

Elizabeth de Somer said the report showed the Federal Government's investment in the NIP had paid off.

"The AIHW report confirms that disease and immunisation awareness, coupled with collaboration between industry and government provides better health outcomes...which we know has a flow on effect to the economy," she said.

## Dispensary Corner

**OVER** the last few decades Irish society dropped the shackles of its conservative history and embraced liberal attitudes to a range of issues, from same-sex marriage to "the right to choose".

This rapid revolution started with the State legalising contraception more than 30 years ago, however, it appears Paddies are jack of the humble condom, a report from dating website RSVP reveals, with sexually transmitted infections (STIs) spiking as a result.

Celebrity pharmacist, Laura Dowling told the match-making website it was no shock that drooping condom sales across the Emerald Isle had been paired with a stiff increase in STIs.

"I am not shocked at all. It makes sense, when people stop using protection they end up getting an STI," she told the dating site's blog.

"Lots of people have unprotected sex. Teens, twenty some-things, middle aged people back on the dating scene after a marriage breakup.

"Condoms are the only way to protect against STIs but they seem to be going out of fashion."

The Dublin-based "Fabulous Pharmacist" added that pharmacists needed to help educate customers about the importance of looking after their sexual health, and to undergo regular screening, as cases of herpes, chlamydia and gonorrhoea are all on the rise in the Republic of Ireland.

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## New Products

- **Dolutegravir (as sodium)/lamivudine (Dovato)** contains dolutegravir, a human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) integrase inhibitor, and lamivudine, a nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor (NRTI), and potent, selective inhibitor of HIV-1 and HIV-2. Dovato is indicated for the treatment of HIV-1 infection in antiretroviral treatment-naïve adults and adolescents (from 12 years of age weighing at least 40 kg) who have no known or suspected resistance to either antiretroviral component. Dovato is contraindicated in combination with dofetilide or pilsicainide. Dovato tablets contain dolutegravir 50 mg and lamivudine 300 mg and are available in a pack size of 30.
- **Fremanezumab (Ajovy)** is a fully humanised IgG2 $\Delta$ a/kappa monoclonal antibody that potently and selectively binds the calcitonin gene-related peptide (CGRP) ligand and blocks both  $\alpha$ - and  $\beta$ -CGRP isoforms from binding to the CGRP receptor, preventing the activation of the trigeminal system. While the precise mechanism of action by which fremanezumab prevents migraine attacks is unknown, it is believed that the prevention of migraine is obtained by its effect modulating the trigeminal system. Ajovy is indicated for the prevention of migraine in adults. Ajovy solution for injection contains fremanezumab 225 mg/1.5 mL in a pack size of 1 prefilled syringe.
- **Galcanezumab (Emgality)** is a humanised IgG4 monoclonal antibody that binds CGRP and prevents its biological activity without blocking the CGRP receptor. Elevated blood concentrations of CGRP have been associated with migraine. In addition, CGRP infusions can induce migraine-like attacks in some individuals with a history of migraine. Emgality is indicated for the prophylaxis of migraine in adults. Emgality solution for injection contains galcanezumab 120 mg/mL and is available in a pack size of 1 prefilled pen.
- **Teduglutide (Revestive)** is an analogue of human glucagon-like peptide (GLP)-2. GLP-2 is known to increase intestinal and portal blood flow, decrease intestinal motility and inhibit gastric acid secretion. Teduglutide binds to the GLP-2 receptors located in intestinal subpopulations of enteroendocrine cells, subepithelial myofibroblasts and enteric neurons of the submucosal and myenteric plexus. Activation of these receptors results in the local release of multiple mediators, including insulin-like growth factor (IGF)-1, nitric oxide and keratinocyte growth factor (KGF). Teduglutide preserves mucosal integrity by promoting repair and normal growth of the intestine through an increase of villus height and crypt depth. Revestive is indicated for the treatment of short bowel syndrome in adults dependent on parenteral support. Revestive is contraindicated with active gastrointestinal tract, hepatobiliary, or pancreatic malignancy; or a history of gastrointestinal tract malignancy, including the hepatobiliary system, within the last 5 years. Revestive powder for injection contains teduglutide 5 mg and is available in a pack size of 28 vials with 28 prefilled syringes containing 0.5 mL diluent.

## New Presentation

- **Ocriplasmin (Jetrea RTU)** is now available as a ready to use solution for intravitreal injection in packs of 1 vial containing ocriplasmin 0.375 mg/0.3 mL.
- **Pegaspargase (Oncaspar)** is now available as a powder for injection in packs of 1 vial containing pegaspargase 3750 units/5 mL.

## New Indications

- **Enzalutamide (Xtandi)** is now indicated for the treatment of patients with non-metastatic castration-resistant prostate cancer.
- **Pembrolizumab (rch) (Keytruda)**, in combination with **lenvatinib (Lenvima)**, is now indicated for the treatment of patients with advanced endometrial carcinoma that is not microsatellite instability-high (MSI-H) or mismatch repair deficient (dMMR), who have disease progression following prior systemic therapy and are not candidates for curative surgery or radiation.

## New Contraindications

- **Dapagliflozin (as propanediol monohydrate)/metformin hydrochloride (Xigduo XR)** is now contraindicated with acute or chronic metabolic acidosis, including lactic acidosis or diabetic ketoacidosis, with or without coma; eGFR persistently < 45 mL/min/1.73m<sup>2</sup>.
- **Dexamethasone (as sodium metasulfobenzoate)/framycetin sulfate/gramicidin (Otodex, Sofradex)** is now contraindicated with viral and fungal infections; acute purulent, untreated infections.
- **Lopinavir/ritonavir (Kaletra)** is now contraindicated with apalutamide.
- **Armodafinil (Nuvigil)** and **Modafinil (Modavigil)** is now contraindicated in women who may become pregnant.
- **Ritonavir (Norvir)** is now contraindicated with venetoclax and apalutamide.

*This list is a summary of only some of the changes that have occurred over the last month. Before prescribing, always refer to the full product information.*