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Queensland joins push for NIP access

PHARMACISTS in Queensland are falling behind their peers in other states and territories in terms of access to vaccinations, Pharmacy Guild of Australia National Vice President, Trent Twomey, believes.

Twomey, who is also the Guild Queensland Branch President, has called on the State Government to follow Victoria's lead in allowing pharmacists to administer vaccinations under the National Immunisation Program (NIP).

In a statement issued yesterday afternoon, Twomey said pharmacists could help reduce preventable hospitalisations in the state if they were empowered to work to their full scope of practice.

Twomey highlighted data from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, noting there were more than 179,000 preventable hospitalisations in Queensland in 2017/18.

"A significant proportion of these potentially preventable hospitalisations are due to influenza," he said.

"We know that one-in-four people who are hospitalised with the flu have no underlying medical condition.

"Last year, trained Queensland

community pharmacists administered over 200,000 flu vaccinations, helping to build 'community immunity' against the flu through vaccination.

"However, Queensland is falling behind other states in terms of access for vaccinations.

"I call on the Queensland Government to provide community pharmacist's access to the NIP and lower the age of pharmacist vaccination to 10, in line with other jurisdictions, including a recent announcement in South Australia.

"Community pharmacies are highly accessible in terms of their opening hours and locations and provide support across a range of other potentially preventable hospitalisations including patients suffering from asthma, diabetes, COPD and nutritional deficiencies."

Twomey said Queensland could reap savings by approving pharmacist prescribing, with a planned trial in the state.

"Alarming, over 20,000 potentially preventable hospitalisations due to urinary tract infections were recorded during this reporting period (2017/18)," he said.

"The quickest way to take pressure off patients and hospitals, is to allow



pharmacists to work to their full potential.

"For example, instead of having to wait for hours at an emergency department for antibiotics, that they may have had before, to treat a urinary tract infection – a patient could be prescribed medication by a pharmacist immediately.

"Excessive wait times and high costs of local GPs have long been a barrier when it comes to Queenslanders accessing health services."

Twomey's call for Queensland pharmacists to be allowed to access the NIP, follows a similar push in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT), where the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia has sought approval for pharmacists to provide vaccinations under the program in a pre-Budget submission (PD 19 Nov).

Today's issue of PD

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

Bushfires spark asthma concerns

STRONG winds, bushfires, thunderstorms and high pollen forecasts for today in Victoria, have prompted the National Asthma Council Australia (NACA) to urge pharmacists to talk to their patients about the elevated risk of serious asthma attacks.

The NACA said cases of thunderstorm asthma have been recorded across the country.

"A high price has been paid and tragic lessons learned about prevention and awareness following Victoria's epidemic thunderstorm asthma event," she said.

"That event took 10 lives and resulted in thousands of people presenting to emergency departments, GPs and pharmacies with breathing difficulties on 21 Nov 2016."

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Wizard lands Friendlies

WIZARD Pharmacy is expanding its presence in Western Australia, with three former Friendlies Pharmacies set to join the franchise over the coming months.

The three pharmacies located in Banksia Grove, Enex 100 and Brookfield Place, extending the group's footprint in Perth's northern suburbs, and giving it a presence in the CBD.

New franchisee, Andrew Stent, said the group's customer-centric focus and retail support were key factors in his decision to join Wizard, which also includes Pharmacy Guild of Australia 2020 Pharmacy of the Year finalist, Kalgoorlie Central.

"It was clear from early on that Wizard's vision and values align with my own and their focus was on the needs of the customer," he said.

"The sophistication of Wizard's Support Office was the biggest surprise.



"Their investment around IT and data analytics positions Wizard as a market leader in the retail environment.

"This support around the retail components of my pharmacy allows my team of pharmacists to focus on being the best pharmacists they can be.

"I'm really excited about what lies ahead with Wizard. I'm particularly looking forward to seeing the reactions from our loyal customers as we take them on this new journey."

Pictured, Andrew Stent with Wizard Pharmacy Chief Operating Officer, Sally Parker.

NPSA members rally for fire emergency

MEMBERS of the National Pharmaceutical Services Association (NPSA) have rallied to help deliver essential medicines to needy victims of the ongoing bushfire emergency.

Team members at Symbion, Sigma and API warehouses in NSW and Queensland have adjusted their delivery schedules and remapped distribution routes to work alongside

emergency services to ensure those in need do not miss out, with NPSA Chairman, Mark Hooper, hailing the commitment of the trade association.

"Our members are part of Australia's critical infrastructure for health services and we take that role seriously every day, but at times like this we know that it is up to us to go beyond what government asks us for," he said.

ST Payroll deadline passes - what now?

THE Australian Taxation Office (ATO) has noted that a number of small businesses (with 19 or less employees) in the pharmacy and cosmetics industry have missed the deadline of 30 Sep to report through Single Touch Payroll (STP), but said it's not too late.

ATO Assistant Commissioner, Jason Lucchese, said that for small employers who aren't sure where to start, there are

three pathways they can take: start reporting now; apply for a quarterly reporting concession (if eligible); or apply for a deferral if you need more time.

To guide small employers through their transition to STP, the ATO has launched a video series (tv.ato.gov.au) and an interactive online quiz to help small employers understand their options - [CLICK HERE](#).



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Travel & Cruise Weekly

Dispensary Corner

SOMETIMES it's hard to know what the great folk of South Dakota are up to, all tucked away up in the Midwest.

However, the state's Department of Social Services has done its best to make clear some of South Dakota's most "popular" pastimes.

Say what you want about the recently released, "Meth. Were on it" campaign, but the seemingly counter-intuitive slogan has certainly raised awareness about the problem the drug is causing in the southernmost Dakota.

The state's Governor, Kristi Noem, doubled-down on the controversial campaign, reported to cost US\$500,000, tweeting, "The whole point of this ad campaign is to raise awareness.

"I think that's working." While the slogan received an icy reception from some, who wondered whether the state is attempting to tackle the problem or is on the drug, the exact problem is, both are true.

As reported by *NBC News*, twice as many South Dakota teenagers aged 12-17 reported using methamphetamine in the past year than the national average.

Vic pharmacists honoured

THREE Victorian pharmacists honoured at this week's Victorian Pharmacists' Dinner exemplified both the breadth of opportunities a career in pharmacy offers, as well as the variety of ways in which dedicated professionals can make a difference to health care in the community, Pharmaceutical Society of Australia Victorian Branch President, Ben Marchant, said.



Roslyn Stewart (pictured above) from Broadford was awarded the Victorian Pharmacist Medal.

"During Roslyn's working life, she has helped advance the optimisation and standardisation of treatment regimens and been committed to improving mental health care," Marchant said.

Brighton's Kay Dunkley (pictured above right) received the Victorian Excellence Award.

"During the more than 20 years Kay has committed to caring for patients, she has also been a



leader in ensuring the health and wellbeing of her peers," Marchant said, presenting the award.

Dr Amanda Cross (pictured below) of Albanvale was named Early Career Pharmacist of the Year. "While Amanda is still in the early years of her career as a



pharmacist, she has already had a significant impact on medicine safety in Victoria, particularly in terms of protecting older people with cognitive impairment from medicine errors," Marchant said.

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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