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Victoria lowers pharmacy flu vax age

VICTORIA is the third Australian state to grant pharmacists approval to administer flu vaccinations to children as young as 10 years old.

The decision announced yesterday follows similar moves by the Tasmanian (**PD** 20 May) and Western Australian (**PD** 20 Jun) Governments earlier this year.

Both the Pharmacy Guild of Australia and the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) have welcomed the announcement, with a Guild spokesperson telling **Pharmacy Daily**, "it's a positive step towards harmonisation".

Guild Victorian Branch President, Anthony Tassone, said the decision to lower the age limit from 16 and over to 10, would help broaden public access to evidence-based vaccinations and increase uptake.

"This is a welcome advance in public health - lowering the minimum age of pharmacist-administered flu vaccinations will undoubtedly improve access and save more lives," he said.

"Pharmacist immunisers will be able to implement this change without any difficulty because they already receive the same training as other immunisers.

"There is more work to be done so that Victorians have the opportunity to be vaccinated against the full range of conditions that pharmacist immunisers in our state have been asked to undertake training in."

With more than 61,500 laboratory confirmed cases of the flu in Victoria to date this year, PSA Victorian Branch President, Ben Merchant, said the state's Health and Ambulance Minister, Jenny Mikakos', decision was "particularly important".

"Research had shown internationally and locally that pharmacists are considered highly accessible," he said.

"87% of Victorians live within 2.5km of a pharmacy, which are generally open longer hours than other primary health services.



"This change will enable more people, including families, to access influenza vaccination, and build immunity within the Victorian community."

Mikakos said the decision would provide a new option for parents seeking to protect their children from the flu and called on the community to "never listen to anyone peddling lies and misinformation about vaccinations".

"The science is crystal clear - they're safe, effective and they save lives," she said.

Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today has two pages of news plus a full page from **Razor Group**.

New regulations for S8 cannabis

NSW Health has announced moves to simplify the requirements for prescribers of Schedule 8 (S8) cannabis medicines under the Poisons and Therapeutic Goods Regulation 2008.

Under the amended regulation only Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) issued approval will be required in most cases for scripts issued since 30 Sep.

NSW authority will be required for scripts supplying S8 cannabis medicine to children, when extemporaneously compounded for clinical trials, and drug dependent patients.



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Reference: 1. Resolve Plus Product Information Date of Most Recent Amendment June 13 2017.

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Dispensary Corner

IT'S NOW more than half a century since Neil Armstrong set foot on the moon - but the space program continues to make major contributions to the global community.

However, none more so than a key breakthrough achieved last month on the International Space Station, where a 3D printer has been used to create some artificial meat.

The "bioprinter", used in a collaborative experiment between companies from the USA, Russia and Israel, was able to make small amounts of beef, rabbit and fish tissue using magnetic fields in conditions of weightlessness - giving astronauts the hope that one day they might be able to get their protein in the form of a roast dinner en route to Mars.

A spokesperson for the researchers described the breakthrough as "one small nibble for man, one giant bite for mankind".

THE latest culinary trend in Ecuador is guinea pig-flavoured ice cream.

The innovative combination isn't as unusual as you might expect, with the cute, cuddly rodents also a food staple in some Latin American nations.

Normally, however, they are served with potatoes and peanut sauce, rather than as a cold dessert.

The guinea pig ice cream is served at a roadside stall in Quito, where the vendor has also created an ice confection flavoured with beetles.

Zantac recalled globally

GLAXOSMITHKLINE has issued a global recall for Zantac (ranitidine) over concerns about contamination with N-nitrosodimethylamine (NDMA), expanding an earlier alert which saw the drug pulled in Ireland, India and Hong Kong.

The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) last week issued an update about the removal of several ranitidine-containing products from the Australian market, leading to shortages of tablets and oral liquids.

"Additional brands may be recalled as the TGA continues testing and discussions with companies that supply ranitidine," the TGA said.

Long-term exposure to NDMA, over a period of years, "can increase an individual's risk of developing cancer," according to the TGA, which notes that the risks from short-term use of ranitidine are expected to be extremely low.

Pharmacists providing advice to patients accessing ranitidine over the counter are being told to discuss treatment options and "review whether ongoing pharmacotherapy is appropriate".

The European Medicines Agency kicked off a review of ranitidine medications last month (**PD** 20 Sep), while other regulators including the US FDA have also raised concerns.

Hoons hit pharmacy

JOYRIDING teens racing through the streets of Warrnambool are "lucky to be alive" after slamming into a pharmacy at high speeds on Wed night.

Victorian Police reported a 16-year-old driver crashed through a railing and then off a 1.5 metre embankment into the side of a pharmacy in the Dennington area.

The teen hoon was taken to Warrnambool Base Hospital with non-life-threatening injuries.

CWH takes plunge into Chinese market

CHEMIST Warehouse (CWH) will open its first store in China later this month, *The Australian* reports.

The pharmacy will be in Zhengzhou, Henan province, in Central China, with the company's Chinese arm to be led by CEO, Nancy Jian.

The decision to launch a bricks and mortar store follows the company's online success,

with papers reporting it sold more than \$20 million worth of product in the first seven hours of last year's Singles' Day 24-hour sale, through Alibaba's ecommerce platform in partnership with Tmall Global.

The discounter has also announced it has renewed its strategic partnership with Tmall, which will see the expansion of the brand online.



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Jobs of the Week

- **Pharmacist** - South-west of Melbourne, VIC (Job# 200033097)
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- **Pharmacist Manager** - South Coast, WA (Job# 200033443)
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- **Pharmacist In Charge** - Queanbeyan, ACT (Job# 200033444)
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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.

19 Oct: QLD Annual Therapeutic Update; Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre; for program details and to register visit: www.psa.org.au

27 - 30 Oct: Pharmacy Alliance Members' Forum; Pullman Cairns International; for details visit: www.pharmacyalliance.com.au

14 - 16 Nov: SHPA Medicines Management 2019 (MM2019); GCCEC, Gold Coast; register now at: www.mm2019shpa.com



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