

Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today has three pages of news.

Another Dr attack

AUSTRALIAN Medical Association Vice President, Dr Chris Zappala is the latest medico to slam pharmacists, accusing owners of wanting to implement professional services "to increase foot traffic in their pharmacies so more supplements, foot massagers, perfume and over-the-counter drugs can be sold".

Writing in the AMA's *Australian Medicine* newsletter on Fri, Zappala said the pharmacy ownership and location rules "create a small, protected group of pharmacists owning businesses at least partially insulated from true market forces. How cosy!"

The AMA VP claimed the Guild's push for "dispensing whatever possible" enables owners to shift more stock and have up-sell opportunities, while in terms of counselling, "a free discussion with a non-doctor to do a doctor's job is never appropriate".

"We need patients/consumers and Government to understand that the seductive allure of convenience or affordability is sometimes a deceptive veneer only, and should never be allowed to eclipse quality, evidence or plain common sense," he said.

Pharmacists need to stop apologising

PHARMACISTS need to be proud of their profession and stop apologising, two speakers told delegates at Pharmacy Connect in Sydney last week.

University of Alberta Department of Pharmacology Chair, Dr Ross Tsuyuki, said pharmacists needed to adopt more positive terms about themselves, if the profession is to achieve its goals.

"Sorry, I'm a pharmacist - I hate that," he said.

"Why do we do that? Why do we teach people that?"

"I see this in hospitals quite a bit, where there's a committee there will be nurses, doctors and somebody will say, 'I'm Ross, I'm just a pharmacist'."

"Stop doing that! Such messages convey subservience, a lack of confidence and whatever the opposite of patient care is.

"We can't control everything about our image... but at least we can control the things that come out of our mouths [and] the stuff that we publish.

"We need to respect ourselves before others will."

New Pharmacy Guild of Australia



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Executive Director, Suzanne Greenwood, echoed Tsuyuki's comments during the Judy Liew Address (see page 2).

"I've been in this role two weeks and already I've noticed that trend of pharmacists being apologetic about 'Oh, I'm just the pharmacist'," she said.

"That's absolute rubbish. You've completed prolonged training, you've got formal qualifications, you've studied at university, you've completed internships, you've got continuing professional development," Greenwood stated.

"You are professionals...you are health professionals," she said.

"I'm a lawyer by profession,

and I hold all other professions in high regard, but speaking with pharmacists this week it's clear that the pharmacy profession itself needs a bit of an overhaul on how you think about yourselves."

Tsuyuki added that pharmacists needed to adjust their vocabulary away from terms like "retail pharmacy" and "store" instead of pharmacy.

"Do any other health professionals add the term 'retail'? Is there a retail proctologist?" he asked.

"Don't call your pharmacy a store - it's a pharmacy.

"It paints us as shopkeepers rather than health professionals."

ADHA messaging

THE Australian Digital Health Agency is now working with 42 organisations to ensure health professionals can share info using secure messaging, in a major step towards eliminating paper-based messaging.

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Female focus key to pharmacy success

COMMUNITY pharmacy needs to embrace women working within the profession, Pharmacy Guild of Australia, Executive Director, Suzanne Greenwood, believes.

Delivering the Judy Liauw Address at the Guild's Pharmacy Connect conference on Sat, Greenwood (pictured) called on men in pharmacy to support women looking to get into the profession's ownership ranks.

"Men need to be the champions of change for us in this space," Greenwood said, noting "there are more women studying pharmacy than men."

"The workforce in community pharmacy is highly feminised, and the majority of people who are coming into community pharmacies are women."

"So, put simply the success of your pharmacy depends on your ability to tap into this, and as a network I would submit that more work needs to be done to support women into pharmacy ownership

in particular.

"That's probably a rabbit hole too big and too dark to jump down today... but certainly while I've been at Pharmacy Connect and talking to the students, their minds are already jumping forward to 'how do I eventually get into pharmacy ownership?'"

Greenwood added the profession needed to support women to become role models and mentors for the next generation of female pharmacy owners.

"You can't be what you can't see," she said.

"I know that sounds like an odd comment, but for women in business we actually don't have that many role models to look up to and in many respects therefore it is the men that are in those leadership roles that we need them to champion us and be supportive."

"Otherwise we can't see what it looks like."

"We can't see what female leadership looks like and we don't



have the support of the men to get there.

"So we really need to identify female role models and mentors within community pharmacy."

"We need to support them to share their stories. We need to encourage that mentorship amongst female pharmacy owners to those that are coming through the ranks."

iNova-Juno deal

THE Australian Competition and Consumer Commission is undertaking a "public informal merger review" of the proposed acquisition of Juno PC Holdings Pty Limited by iNova Pharmaceuticals.

The ACCC noted that iNova supplies, among other items, a prescription weight loss medication containing phentermine, while Juno PC "is currently developing prescription weight loss medication with the same active ingredient".

Submissions are being invited from interested parties regarding the proposed acquisition, with a deadline of 13 Sep 2019.

The Commission is proposing to announce its findings by the end of net month, with the outcome either a final decision or the release of a Statement of Issues.



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Dispensary Corner

PHARMACY Guild NSW Branch Committee member and head of Pharmacy4Less, Feras Karem, may be pondering a rebrand, after the University of Alberta's Dr Ross Tsuyuki, expressed his disdain for the use of "discount type terminology", at Pharmacy Connect on Fri.

Karem, who chaired the session titled 'The biggest enemy of pharmacists are...pharmacists', was left wondering whether conference organisers had deliberately chosen him to host Tsuyuki's presentation, knowing he disapproved of pharmacists who focused on price.

A number of "supportive" colleagues were overheard encouraging the Pharmacy4Less boss to consider alternative names, while Karem laughingly said he'd flag their suggestions at the firm's next roadshow, possibly putting it to a vote.

TAMIFLU isn't the only thing governments are stockpiling.

Chinese officials are getting close to releasing some of the country's reserves of frozen pork, amid squeals from the community about shortages due to a swine fever epidemic.

About a third of the country's porcine population has been wiped out by the disease which is also known as "pig ebola".

Measures addressing the issue include rationing and subsidies to encourage pig breeding.

It's unclear how large the Chinese stocks of pig meat are, but officials said they were closely monitoring the situation before trotting out the reserves.

Lowe comes out on top



HEALTHSAVE Pharmacy Charlestown's Brianne Lowe (pictured above), will represent NSW at the finals of the Pharmacy Guild of Australia/Maxigesic Pharmacy Assistant of the Year Award, in Brisbane next month.

Lowe saw off competition from 20 state finalists to secure the NSW title at a workshop at Pharmacy Connect on Fri.



Lowe said she had been "chuffed" to get the opportunity to attend the workshop, adding that winning the state gong was "just the cherry on top".

Priceline Pharmacy Menai's James Prasad (pictured above), will also represent NSW at the National finals after he took home the Glucojel Super Star Award for outstanding customer service.

TGA trust-based regulation fail: Harvey

AUSTRALIA'S "trust-based regulatory system" for overseeing Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods (ARTG) is failing consumers, health and preventative medicine advocate, Ken Harvey, believes.

Responding to criticism of a recent study by researchers from the University of Adelaide, Curtin University and Murdoch University, highlighting a high rate of contamination of complementary and alternative medicine sold in Australia, by Complementary Medicines Australia (CMA) (PD 06 Sep), Harvey said it amplified the Therapeutic Goods Administration's (TGA's) post-market research.



"CMA said research into supplements was designed to sully the industry," he said on Twitter, linking to a letter he had written to *The Age* newspaper.

"But it reflects a trust-based regulatory system that has failed to protect consumers."



Guild Update

Community pharmacists atrial fibrillation awareness week

COMMUNITY pharmacists can play a major role in atrial fibrillation week by holding awareness/screening events to provide information and free checks for AF.

This year's event, with the theme Preventing stroke in atrial fibrillation – It's a no-brainer, is being held from 16th-22nd September.

AF affects more than half a million Australians and for people living with AF, the risk of stroke is five-to-seven times greater than the general population. Early diagnosis and effective treatment are crucial to reducing the risk of stroke.

According to the Australian Atlas of Healthcare Variation, atrial fibrillation has been estimated to affect 6 per cent of Australian men and 5 per cent of Australian women aged 55 years and over.

REGISTER HERE for the 2019 AF Awareness Week, or visit www.hearts4heart.org.au/register, email info@hearts4heart.org.au or phone 1300 343 278 for more information.