

Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today has two pages of news.

Winter warmers

SUPPLIERS wanting to showcase products for the upcoming cooler season are being invited to participate in Pharmacy Daily's upcoming Winter Spotlight feature.

For more information contact our team on advertising@pharmacydaily.com.au.

FIP vax quiz

PHARMACISTS will be able to test their immunisation knowledge on Sat when the International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) Young Pharmacist Group hosts a Twitter Quiz at 5pm (AEST).

The quiz is part of World Immunization Week.

Drop in footfall hits CBD pharmacies

SOCIAL distancing measures combined with a significant increase in the number of people working remotely are hitting the bottom-lines of several pharmacies in CBDs across Australia, business experts report.

Speaking to Pharmacy Daily following unconfirmed reports that one discount group had closed a number of inner-city stores in Melbourne in response to the COVID-19 crisis, business consultant, Bruce Annabel, noted the fall in foot traffic in cities and shopping centres was hurting many pharmacies located in those areas.

"CBD pharmacies generally have been hit pretty hard," he said.

"They've lost huge proportions of their sales principally because they've lost the traffic, and the shopping centre pharmacies have also been hit hard due to a lack of traffic.

"The front of shop discretionary spend has been curtailed pretty significantly, as people turn their

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attention to buying the things that they need.

"From speaking with my clients who are in different states, that's exactly what they're finding, people are buying the prescriptions, the over-the-counter medicines, the vitamins that help them with stress and help their health more generally, and the surgical and wound-care type of stuff... they're selling very little of that front of shop sundry stuff."

Annabel said pharmacy owners in CBD and shopping centre locations should consider scaling back the size of their stores with the view to cutting back on front of shop non-healthcare-related stock.

Melbourne-based Medici Capital Owner, Frank Sirianni, said the group had not seen evidence of mass CBD pharmacy closures, but noted some stores in the city were operating reduced hours, noting pedestrian traffic in the city has reported dropped by between 50 and 70% depending on the day.



"In most instances the trading hours have been reduced to match the trading hours of nearby major anchor tenants or landlord," he said.

Australian Pharmacy Group Managing Director, Rob Whelan, said he was unaware of any temporary closures in Melbourne, but noted "everything is changing on a daily basis as you know and, it would not surprise me to see temporary closures in the CBD and shopping centres", adding that brands with two or more stores in an area may look to consolidate on a temporary basis.

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Dispensary Corner

GOOD news - the Tooth Fairy is apparently immune to COVID-19 - at least according to America's top coronavirus authority.

Dr Anthony Fauci, who has shot to prominence in nightly government briefings, appeared as a guest on a Snapchat show hosted by none other than Will Smith called "Will From Home".

A question posed by a seven-year-old Fresh Prince fan asked Fauci about the risks to the Tooth Fairy during the pandemic.

"I don't think you need to worry about the Tooth Fairy," Fauci reassured the youngster.

"When your tooth falls out, you stick it under the pillow, and I'll guarantee you that the Tooth Fairy is not going to get infected and is not going to get sick."

ALSO in the "only in America" category comes a story about a shoplifter who didn't quite manage to get away with some sneakily snaffled goods from a store in Omaha, Nebraska.

The crafty heist, involving a stolen \$40 bottle of cologne, came after the miscreant had turned up at the outlet in order to apply for a job.

Surveillance footage confirmed that prior to pinching the perfume the hapless 20-year-old had completed an application form, complete with his name, phone number and address.

Police didn't even have to go and find him, arresting him later that day when he returned to the store for an interview.

Priceline network grows as sales fall

HALF-YEAR financial results for pharmaceutical wholesaler, Australian Pharmaceutical Industries (API) reveal an 11.5% fall in earnings before interest and tax to \$39.3 million, with register sales from its Priceline Pharmacy network down 1.8% for the six months to 29 Feb.

In a statement to the Australian Securities Exchange (ASX), API Chair, Mark Smith, noted that the Priceline retail group had grown to 488 stores - a net increase of nine on the prior corresponding period.

"Whilst maintaining marketshare, Priceline Pharmacy network's overall total register sales were down 1.8% to \$89 million," he said.

"This result reflects the challenging retail conditions, bushfires and declining consumer sentiment across the Australian



retail market in the six months to Feb."

Smith added that the Priceline group had spent the last six months "resetting its strategy to strengthen its health offering", completing the roll-out of its click-and-collect service and trialling a click-and-deliver option.

While the company's retail

business experienced challenging times over the first half of the 2020 Financial Year, API's distribution revenue grew by 4.8% on H1 FY2019.

"The focus on higher margin business, to win new customer groups and on growing our banner brands and retail services is succeeding," he said.

Patients need more than FaceTime

MOVES to implement telehealth services in response to the COVID-19 crisis are being welcomed by the Rural Pharmacy Network Australia (RPNA), but the group they should only be a temporary measure.

RPNA Co-Chair, Fredrik Hellqvist, said that while telehealth and telepharmacy services including Home Medicines Reviews (HMRs) and Residential Medication Management Reviews (RMMRs) made sense in the current climate "some of these measures are not appropriate for the longer term".

Hellqvist said the measures should be temporary and suspended by 30 Jun.

"It is very important that these services are delivered face-to-face, especially the initial consultation," he said.

"Telehealth may have a place in rural health - and perhaps it may be appropriate under certain circumstances for follow-up consultations... but the patient should always be given the choice of face-to-face service alongside the telehealth option."

Hellqvist also called for further rule changes to the HMR and RMMR programs to allow pharmacists to refer patients to themselves or an accredited pharmacist.

"At the moment patients in rural areas are missing out for a number of reasons," he said.

"Many patients do not even have access to a GP where they live.

"Nobody is in a better position than rural community pharmacists to identify who needs a review."

Dank GP's rego cancelled

A GP who pleaded guilty to charges of unsatisfactory professional conduct and professional misconduct in relation to the prescribing of peptide hormones and other performance and image enhancing drugs for sports scientist, Stephen Dank, has had her registration cancelled.

The NSW Health Care Complaints Commission ruled that Dr Alicia Meneghetti's conduct was so serious that her registration be cancelled and that she be barred from seeking re-registration for 18 months, from 16 Apr.

Dank has been banned from involvement in all sports that have signed the World Anti-Doping Code 2015.