

Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today has three pages of news, plus a full page from MSC Signs.

PSA's new online training format

IN RESPONSE to the rising demand for pharmacist-administered influenza vaccines and mental health support the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) is launching a new online training format.

PSA is also transitioning to online delivery so pharmacists and intern pharmacists can complete essential training in a blended format, while complying with social distancing and minimising workforce disruptions.

Learning for the First Aid and CPR courses is completed online with the theory assessment also being completed in the pre-course work. The assessment is a very short face to face component with the trainer where students demonstrate the skills required for the particular unit.

CLICK HERE for more.

API warns landlords to cut rents

SHOPPING centre landlords are being urged to come to the table and renegotiate pharmacy rents amid a decline in foot traffic, as a result of the COVID-19 crisis.

Presenting Australian Pharmaceutical Industries' (API) half year results yesterday, CEO, Richard Vincent, warned the group was willing to shut stores if the group could not secure more reasonable rental terms, the *Sydney Morning Herald* reported.

"We have engaged in discussions with our landlords and in most instances those discussions are proving fruitful, but where they are not fruitful, we are not afraid to permanently close stores or clinics," he said.

"Our conversations have been unfolding very slowly. In a lot of cases, they [landlords] have said 'we'll get to you, or a particular store, in due course'."

Vincent's comments came as the company reported an 11.5% decrease in earnings before interest and tax on the prior corresponding period (*PD* yesterday), while the Priceline Pharmacy network recorded a 1.3% decline in like-for-like sales, excluding dispensary, for the same timeframe.



API's warning follows reports that some CBD-based and shopping centre pharmacies have been forced to reduce opening hours, as a result of a significant fall in customer numbers stemming from the restrictions that have been implemented to tackle COVID-19 in Australia.

Speaking to *Pharmacy Daily* earlier this week, business consultant, Bruce Annabel, suggested that some pharmacy owners based in major shopping centres may need to review their store's footprint to optimise their

potential earnings.

"The situation today is a lot of these pharmacies are too big and carry a lot of stock they can't sell, particularly now," he said.

"Some of my clients have been staying in shopping centre, but they've been really cutting back on space and doing deals with landlords and getting doctors in nearby or adjacent, and cutting their space way back to 200-250m²."

"If you do that you get good sales per 1m² and you'll be selling higher margin lines where you can compete."



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Reference: 1. Resolve Plus Product Information. Date of Most Recent Amendment 26 October 2018.



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Stocktake app

PHARMACY software provider, Minfos, is offering free access to its new stocktaking app, to stores that use its software.

Announcing the launch of the app, EBOS General Manager Pharmacy Technology, Andrew Hall, said it could be used for reviewing a product's stocktake history, provide the current stock-on-hand (SOH) information and retail price.

"We recognise that systematic stocktaking is essential to achieving accurate inventory reporting, which is also necessary for making sound decisions around stock level management.

"The Minfos App saves time and minimises manual entry errors.

"There is no need to manage paper-based stock counts, spreadsheets or CSV file uploads.

"You simply scan the barcode on your phone, enter the current stock count and hit update."

Minfos customers can download the free app from the Apple App Store or Google Play.

A paid version of the app, which connects to the Android-based Honeywell scanner hardware is also available, and advised for more frequent stocktake activities.

Online OSCEs may fuel more learning

SHIFTING from face-to-face oral assessments to online objective structured clinical examinations (OSCEs) may drive learning, Sydney University School of Pharmacy, Associate Professor, Rebekah Moles, believes.

Speaking during an International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) online panel discussion focused on pharmacy education during the COVID-19 crisis on Wed, Moles revealed plans to conduct OSCEs using video call service, Zoom.

"We ran a full practice OSCE exam [on Tue and Wed] with our 50 MPharm students," she said.

"We weren't sure how it was going to work, by using a Zoom platform to run an OSCE, but I'm very pleased to announce that it ran perfectly."

Under the model the school plans to use for its OSCEs in Jun, students will be given a week to prepare for 18 cases, to be



assessed on three, rather than an hour to prepare for three cases, involving speaking to a doctor, a patient and another pharmacist, which was the case in the past with the school's face-to-face OSCEs.

"You still have to learn in-depth about 18 cases within that week, which I'm really excited about, because I know assessment drives learning, so I think our students are going to learn more," she said.

Moles told the webinar that the use of 18 separate cases would protect the integrity of the assessments, noting "yes, they're going to cooperate on preparing for these 18 cases... [but] if you've learned the information maybe it doesn't matter if you've collaborated on preparing for those 18 cases".

"You have no idea exactly what we're going to ask during the exam," she said.

E-script webinar

THE Australian Digital Health Agency (ADHA) will host an Electronic Prescribing update for health practitioners on Wed 29 Apr, at 6:30 pm (AEST).

The webinar will address the accelerated electronic prescribing initiative as well as image-based prescribing, which was announced as part of the COVID-19 national health plan.

CLICK HERE to register.

Distancing a struggle in British stores

PHARMACISTS in the UK say they are unable to comply with social distancing guidelines in their stores, a survey from the Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS) reveals.

Results from the poll published in *The Pharmaceutical Journal*, found just over one-in-20 reported that staff in their pharmacies could meet the two-metre distancing advice due to the size of their stores, and dispensaries in particular.

The survey also found 40% of pharmacists said they were also unable to maintain social distance from patients.

A third of respondents reported they did not have access to personal protective equipment (PPE) including fluid-resistant (type IIR) surgical masks (FRSMs).

RPS President, Sandra Gidley, expressed concern at the results, and urged pharmacy staff who are unable to maintain the recommended two-metre



social distancing from either patients or colleagues to wear FRSMs.

"There should be no compromise on safety for pharmacy teams and PPE supplies to pharmacy need to reflect this," she said.

"Pharmacists and their staff could end up spreading the virus, as well as being unable to work because of sickness".

"It is essential the government steps up and provides sufficient PPE to enable pharmacists to face the realities of working in a pharmacy during the pandemic."

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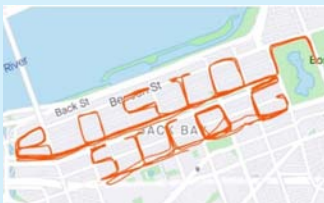
Dispensary Corner

IT'S definitely the thought that counts - and a lot of thought went into this project.

A nurse in Boston has run a solo marathon and mapped out her route, in the hopes of providing an inspirational message for the city's COVID-19 impacted citizenry.

Lindsay Devers trained for about five months for the now postponed official marathon, then undertook meticulous planning to create her own 42km route which was carefully plotted so it would spell out "Boston Strong" - the slogan which came to prominence after the 2013 Boston Marathon Bombing.

However after successfully undertaking the endurance feat along the Boston riverside and then checking it out on the Strava App (pictured) she realised something important was missing - the letter "N" - changing the tag-line to the slightly less inspirational "Boston Strog".



Devers said she didn't pick up the typo until the very end, and while disappointed said despite the mishap, "I think a lot of people are inspired by it."

"And a lot of people have had some really good laughs, so I think it's a great comic relief in this stressful period."

Telepharmacy platform

DIGITAL medication management app provider, MedAdvisor, has launched a telepharmacy platform to support pharmacists to conduct medication reviews during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The introduction of the new platform follows the Federal Government's announcement that accredited pharmacist can now provide Sixth Community Pharmacy Agreement-funded programs including MedsCheck, Diabetes MedsCheck, Home Medicines Review (HMR) and Residential Medication Management Review (RMMR) services using telepharmacy.

MedAdvisor CEO, Robert Read, said data from the platform would help pharmacists identify and contact eligible patients using the company's PlusOne app, to boost medicines safety during the crisis.

"This announcement is another example of how pharmacists are adapting and innovating to ensure they continue to provide the best healthcare for their communities," he said.

"It also goes a long way towards reducing the risk to pharmacists - our often forgotten frontline of this pandemic - who we need on hand



to deliver life-saving medication to our most vulnerable.

"With MedAdvisor network pharmacies recording more than 34,000 MedsChecks and Diabetes MedsChecks between 01 Jan to 31 March this year, there is strong demand for these services in the community and it is imperative that they are not interrupted as a result of COVID-19 self-isolation and social distancing measures.

"By opening these services up to be supported by telepharmacy initiatives we can ensure continuity of care for those most vulnerable in our community."

TGA backs S3 low dose CBD

A **SAFETY** review conducted by Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) backs moves to down-schedule low dose cannabidiol (CBD).

"Doses in the range of 1 mg/kg/day (up to ~60 mg/day) and less may have possible clinical utility when used via the oral route in the management of some conditions that do not require medical practitioner oversight and thus could be considered for down scheduling," the review said.

"At low doses, CBD appears to have an acceptable safety and tolerability profile, although it was evident that there is a high potential for drug-drug interactions when used concomitantly with many other commonly prescribed drugs that are metabolised via CYP pathways.

"Whilst there are some minor signals of adverse effects such as mild drowsiness and fatigue, this could be managed as for similar S3 medicines."

WHO attacked

SINCE the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the World Health Organization (WHO) has seen a dramatic increase in the number of cyber attacks directed at its staff, and email scams targeting the public.

This week, some 450 active WHO email addresses and passwords were leaked online, the organisation revealed.



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