

Pharmacy must lead on meds safety

PHARMACISTS are being urged not to wait for regulation demanding mandatory incident reporting, but implement systems to learn from errors and boost medication safety.

Speaking during an International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) webinar on Fri night, pharmacist and Pharmapod CEO, Leonora O'Brien, stressed the need for the profession to capture and share information about medication errors and near-miss situations to improve quality use of medicines.

"It's incumbent upon us as professionals to take a leading role in the reduction of patient harm relating to medicine in line with the World Health Organization (WHO) Patient Safety Challenge," she said.

While noting the WHO's goal of reducing medication errors globally by 50% over the next five years was "lofty", she said pharmacists had the skills to help achieve it, if infrastructure to capture and share learnings is implemented.

O'Brien told delegates that in the absence of regulations requiring pharmacists to record incidents, pharmacy owners and managers need to lead the way and create a culture of reporting.



"To have the right culture in place where it's not a punitive culture is critical," she said.

"People need to have a psychologically safe environment before they are open to sharing the mistakes and errors that they have been involved in.

"In the absence of effective leadership [from regulators], then each pharmacist managing their particular practice can take it upon themselves to be that leader and to help train their teams... put in systems to record, review and analyse incidents, then their teams will start to learn from those incidents and they will see the value."

O'Brien said it was important to

highlight the good work being done to improve medicines safety in pharmacies.

"There is that adage that if you can't see it you can't be it," she said.

"Highlighting the good work that people are doing - and there is brilliant work being done in every single country and sometimes it's in a silo, [is important].

"If the regulators aren't underpinning it at a national level, if we keep highlighting the good work that's been done locally then the snowball effect will happen and then it can be rolled out.

"But leadership, as we've seen through COVID-19 is critical to underpinning these behaviours across particular countries."

Today's issue of PD

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

UK mourns fallen pharmacists

BRITAIN fell silent at 11am (GMT +1) yesterday to commemorate key workers, including three pharmacists, who have died as a result of COVID-19.

Marking the passing of Pooja Sharma, Jayesh Bhanubhai Petal and Mehoor Petal, Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS) CEO, Paul Bennett, hailed the work of pharmacists throughout the crisis.

"Pharmacists and their teams are making an incredible contribution to the frontline," he said.

"News that anyone in the pharmacy family has passed away from the virus is a tragedy."

Chester-based pharmacy technician, Mandy Siddon, is also believed to have died as a result of the virus, *Pharmacy Business* reported.

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MHR upgrades

THE My Health Record (MHR) system will undergo an upgrade on Fri 01 May.

The process will commence at 7:30 pm (AEST) and is expected to take three hours.

The Australia Digital Health Agency has noted the upgrade may affect some features or functionality.

However, pharmacists, patients and other health professionals will be able to access, review and update existing MHRs.

During the upgrade users will be unable to link an MHR with a myGov account, verify a patient's identify, create or register a new MHR (except using through the assisted registration tool), access or create a record for a child, or use the National Provider Portal for the first time using PRODA (for health professionals new to the portal).

CLICK HERE for more information.

Profession critical to disaster planning

COMMUNITY pharmacists need to be actively involved in national disaster planning and recovery efforts going forward, the Pharmacy Guild of Australia believes.

In its eight-page submission to the Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements, the Guild made a number of recommendations, including a call for the expansion of Continued Dispensing and complementary emergency supply arrangements to be made a permanent feature of the Australian health system, and the "immediate inclusion of a community pharmacy representative in future national disaster response and recovery working groups, and incident/emergency operations centres as required".

The organisation also noted that "pharmacists should be appropriately recompensed for coordinating urgent medicine supply arrangements in emergencies, and this should be considered in any Commonwealth and State/Territory emergency



management planning".

The Guild added was committed to working with other healthcare professionals, stakeholders, community organisations, and all levels of Government in Australia to improve safe and quality healthcare services and health infrastructure that aim to support all Australians, including in times of crisis or disaster.

"The 2019-20 bushfire season caused significant damage and disruption, and the health system was under increased strain," the

submission states.

"Pharmacists, as frontline health professionals, played a vital role in ensuring patients received the medication and advice they needed to get them through the crisis, often under stressful, trying and difficult conditions and circumstances.

"In order to help shape future national natural disaster planning, preparation, response and recovery efforts, we need to better utilise all the features of Australia's health system, including community pharmacists."

Business appraisal service launched

PHARMACY business consultant, Tod O'Connor, has launched a new online service designed to support community pharmacy owners.

The subscription-based My Pharmacy Appraisal service can provide detailed financial analysis of a store's performance, and offer guidance and commentary designed to boost owners' understanding of the issues and challenges facing the pharmacy.

The platform provides owners with the opportunity to access



a broad range of support from experts in pharmacy accounting, lease negotiations and digital marketing.

CLICK HERE for more.

Still no evidence for hydroxychloroquine

ADVERTISEMENTS heralding Clive Palmer's purchase of 32.9 million doses of hydroxychloroquine for the National Medication Stockpile to combat COVID-19, will not influence the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia's (PSA) stance on the drug.

PSA National President, Dr Chris Freeman, said the organisation was steadfast in its advice against the use of the drug "until robust studies are conducted" supporting hydroxychloroquine

for the treatment of COVID-19, and backed continued restrictions on prescribing.

"We have continually advised our members and pharmacists to hold medicine supply for those who have evidence-based indications for hydroxychloroquine," he said.

"PSA is not aware of any substantive evidence at this stage that backs the use of hydroxychloroquine in the treatment of patients with COVID-19."

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Dispensary Corner

THE US Food and Drug Administration has urged manufacturers of hand sanitisers to make the products taste worse.

More than 1,500 additional manufacturers have registered with the FDA to produce hand sanitiser, but "with this increased supply comes our continued mission to ensure safety of these products.

"It is important that hand sanitisers be manufactured in a way that makes them unpalatable to people," the FDA said, citing a 79% increase in calls to the US National Poison Data System relating to ingestion of the products.

One instance saw a 13-year-old drinking hand sanitiser which had been packaged in a liquor bottle from a distiller, which was "reported to taste like normal drinking alcohol".

PERHAPS-MISGUIDED efforts to stem the spread of COVID-19 in Spain have environmental groups up in arms, after authorities sprayed a local beach in Zahara de los Atunes with bleach.

The radical measure was part of preparations to reduce strict lockdown measures, but has attracted strong criticism particularly from birdlovers who had seen an increase in species on the beach due to having less people around.

"The beach is a living ecosystem...and when you spray it down with bleach you're killing everything you come across," said one outraged local.

NEW PRODUCTS

Suppliers wanting to promote products in this feature should email newproducts@pharmacydaily.com.au

Suregard Reusable Mask Kit - for optimal personal protection

The Suregard Reusable Mask is a reusable, washable, stretchy polyurethane material suitable for people of all ages. The Suregard bacterial & viral filter inserts can be added to the Suregard masks a disposable liner, providing additional infection control coverage. The Suregard filter is a long standing TGA certified hospital grade filtrate which has been independently validated to a rate of 99.9999% bacterial and viral filtration. It's the perfect addition to any discerning users looking for additional personal filtration protection.

The Suregard Reusable Mask kit with Suregard filter insert proudly supports Asthma Australia, with a donation from every mask sale going to the Asthma foundation for continued research and community programs.

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Support a fellow Australian business and your customers at the same time with this highly-effective hand sanitiser. With 70% ethanol alcohol, DB Cosmetics Instant Hand Sanitiser kills 99.99% of germs without water. Available in a handbag-friendly 60ml with secure flip-style lid and also a family-sized 500ml pump bottle for use at home or work. This gel-formula hand sanitiser is enriched with Aloe Vera to help care for skin during periods of frequent use and extra hand washing.

From the brand that brought you the award-winning Luminous Hydrating Foundation and many more makeup must-have items, DB Cosmetics is an Australian owned and operated business that has pivoted from manufacturing makeup to producing high-quality hand sanitiser during the COVID-19 crisis. With a team of Australian men and women behind it, DB Cosmetics remains Certified Cruelty-Free and Vegan. The DB Cosmetics Instant Hand Sanitiser is a key item for hand health and the DB team is proud to be able to produce it to such a high standard to help pharmacies and their customers all over Australia.

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