

## Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features three pages of news.

### Guild brokers CFS partnership

THE Pharmacy Guild Sales and Valuations NSW has entered a partnership with CFS Sales and Consulting, to provide business broking, consulting and appraisals for Pharmacy Guild of Australia members.

CFS Managing Director, Richard Gorman, has more than 35 years' experience providing finance broking and consulting services to the pharmacy sector, while his business partner, Michael Clark has been "heavily involved" in the industry for more than a decade, and works with pharmacy students developing their business plan projects.

## No need to rush COVAX approval

AUSTRALIAN regulators should "hold the line [and] wait for robust data" before approving COVID-19 vaccines, former Pharmaceutical Society of Australia National President, Shane Jackson, believes.

Responding to a statement issued by Federal Health minister, Greg Hunt, welcoming Britain's move to grant emergency approval for the Pfizer vaccine. Jackson tweeted that Australia had the "luxury of time on our side", adding, "confidence in approval processes [is] paramount for vaccine uptake".

A statement from the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) said, "the UK emergency use authorisation is temporary and only relates to a limited number of specific batches of the COVID-19 vaccine BNT162b2 supplied by Pfizer and BioNTech, in response to the increased spread of COVID-19 and loss of life".

"This emergency approval is not a market authorisation, therefore

there is no general authorisation to place this vaccine on the market in the UK," the TGA said.

"This emergency authorisation is in response to the very high disease load in the UK at present, noting that sadly the UK has had over 13,400 new COVID cases in the last 24 hours (Dec 1 2020) and has had over 59,000 deaths."

Meanwhile, the European Medicines Agency (EMA), which is responsible for approving potential COVID-19 vaccines in the EU, has voiced criticism of the Britain's Medicines and Healthcare Regulatory Agency (MHRA) ultra-fast emergency approval process.

The EMA started reviewing preliminary data from the BNT162b2 trials on 06 Oct, with the aim of accelerating its approval process, while the MHRA commenced its analysis on 30 Oct, using less information than the EU's regulator.

Former EMA Executive Director,



Guido Rasi, said he was surprised by the British move to grant emergency approval.

"Personally, I would have expected a robust review of all available data, which the British Government has not done," Rasi said.

The EMA said it expects to be in a position to make a decision on whether or not to grant emergency approval for the vaccine on 29 Dec.

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## Be alert but not alarmed PDL warns

**PHARMACISTS** are being urged to slow down and “scan everything” to reduce the risk of dispensing errors.

A practice alert issued by indemnity insurer, Pharmaceutical Defence Limited (PDL), noted dispensing errors accounted for close to 60% of issues reported to date in 2020.

PDL reported that the most common types of dispensing errors were, “wrong drug supplied” and “wrong strength supplied of the prescribed drug”.

PDL’s Professional Officers said the most frequent causes of these errors stemmed from incorrect data entry of prescription details, incorrect selection of the wrong drug or strength in the dispensing software, and incorrect selection of the wrong drug or strength from the shelf.

Similar packaging, brand or drug names, were identified as factors



associated with dispensing errors.

“PDL strongly urges all pharmacists and dispensing technicians to be aware of these areas of risk and to be consistent and vigilant in how they prepare prescriptions for supply,” the alert said.

The insurer said pharmacists should “slow down, check carefully and always check the duplication” to avoid errors.

PDL said pharmacists should “scan everything and ensure you actually

check that a product has scanned correctly”, while also making sure they scan “every single box” when dispensing multiple packs of a medication.

Separating look alike, sound alike medicines within the dispensary was recommended to mitigate against potential errors.

Pharmacy owners and managers were also advised to schedule regular meetings involving all dispensary staff to discuss risk management and review any “near misses” or errors.

## Bastas joins Corum Board

**ARROTEX** Pharmaceuticals Executive Chair, Dennis Bastas, has joined the board of pharmacy software provider, Corum Group.

The appointment comes almost a month after Corum issued 60 million shares to Arrotex as part of a \$3.3 million capital raising effort.

Corum Chair, Nick England, said Bastas would help the business to pursue its growth strategy.

## COVAX needs rollout plan now: Guild

**PROMISING** results from phase III trials of a number of COVID-19 candidate vaccines highlights the need for a comprehensive immunisation program to be developed, the Pharmacy Guild of Australia believes.

Writing in the organisation’s fortnightly newsletter, Guild Executive Director, Suzanne Greenwood, said pharmacy should play an integral role in the distributive of the vaccines.

“Now is the time to thoroughly plan distribution pathways and it is important that the pivotal role community pharmacy can play is recognised and built into all planning,” she said.

“The community pharmacy sector, in all States and

Territories, has proven to be a valued solution as part of the primary healthcare team to efficiently vaccinate target populations nationally.

“The community pharmacy network of just under 5,800 premises across all urban, regional, rural and remote areas means accessibility for Australians is not an issue.

“Community pharmacy has consistently shown its value in improved vaccination rates through convenience, accessibility and opportunistic vaccination.

“Quite simply, pharmacies offer some of the best opportunities for patients to be vaccinated.”

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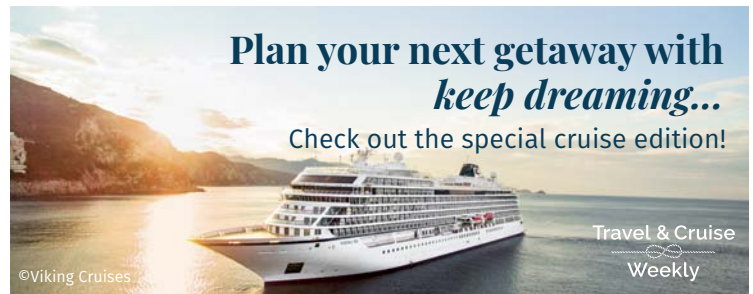
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## South Australia joins e-script rollout

PHARMACIES across South Australia are now able to dispense electronic prescriptions as the rollout of the new technology continues, with patients across Victoria, the ACT and metropolitan Sydney already having access to paperless scripts.

Federal Health Minister, Greg Hunt, described e-scripts as a “critical component” of the Government’s digital health strategy during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“It’s bringing the delivery of medicines into the 21st century,” he said.

“Along with the rollout of telehealth, this is a critical component of the Government’s utilisation of digital health infrastructure and services, which has been brought to the fore during the summer bushfires and the COVID-19 pandemic.

“These initiatives are critical in delivering health services for all Australians now and into the future.”



Welcoming the expansion of e-scripts, Pharmaceutical Society of Australia SA/NT Branch President, Robyn Johns, told *Nine News* that there were a number of benefits to using the new technology.

“It’s going to increase the speed and accuracy of dispensing,” she said.

“It also increased the security of it.”

With more than one million

e-scripts issued to date, Federal Minister for Regional Health, Mark Coulton, said the new system had played a significant role in assisting patients in rural and remote parts of the country access medications.

“Technology is helping to overcome the challenges of distances faced by communities in regional, rural and remote Australia when accessing healthcare and medications,” he said.



**BACK** in the old days - when Dispensary Corner was in school a birthday meant having a night off homework.

Now one New Zealander wants all employers to give staff members a paid day-off *stuff.co.nz* reports.

So enthusiastic about “birthday leave”, Clifford Hallett, wants the Kiwi Prime Minister, Jacinda Ardern, to implement legislation to gift workers an extra day off work so they can celebrate the passage of another year at their bosses’ expense.

In a petition to the New Zealand Parliament, Hallett called on the House of Representatives to “pass legislation to entitle people to an extra day off work on their birthday”.

Outlining the reason for setting up the petition, Hallett said, “my birthday is coming up on 16 Dec, and I believe that people should be allowed to have that extra day off work”.

With just five days to go until the petition closes, just 141 people have signed it.



## PBS lists Fostair

**INHALED** combination asthma therapy, Fostair (beclomethasone dipropionate and formoterol fumarate dihydrate) has been added to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) from 01 Dec.

The medication is indicated in adults (18 years and older) for the regular treatment of asthma where the use of a combination product is appropriate.

Fostair can be prescribed as a daily maintenance therapy in conjunction with a short-acting beta2 agonist, such as salbutamol, as the reliever.

## Win with Powerhouse Pharmacy Brands

Everyday this week Pharmacy Daily and Powerhouse Pharmacy Brands are giving away a product hamper filled with products from the PHPB portfolio to the RRP Value of \$150.00.

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