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Expanded scope delivers savings

INTERNATIONAL evidence shows governments that have supported pharmacists working to their full scope of practice have reaped savings and improved primary care capacity, 2018 Churchill Fellowship recipient, Lucy Walker notes.

Following a seven-week, eight-country tour, Walker reported that Federal funding for pharmacist services would help ensure community pharmacies commit to successfully implementing vaccine, ailment and chronic condition management programs.

"An Australian common ailment scheme would enable more timely access to healthcare advice, plus be beneficial for our healthcare system and could assist our pharmacists develop the clinical competencies for our future role in the healthcare system," she said.

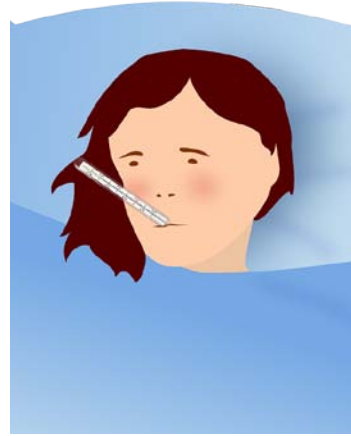
"By starting now with conditions already managed within

pharmacies but with a more formalised, funded, technology enabled, collaborative structure, more like prescribing, we could develop our pharmacists' skills of assessment, care plans and follow up and be a confident workforce ready to adapt to the needs of our aging populations.

"Current funding and scope of practice differs across Australia.

"Ideally, pharmacists should be funded to undertake flu vaccinations, be able to vaccinate children from 10 years of age and have access to the National Immunisation Program stock.

"Over time they should also be able to vaccinate against pneumococcal, shingles and meningococcal disease, plus widen their scope to include travel vaccinations and other medications that patients may need help administering via the subcutaneous



and intramuscular route."

Walker also called for Australian Governments to implement trials of new pharmacist-led services, highlighting the Queensland Health trail of pharmacist prescribing of antibiotics for urinary tract infections as an example.

CLICK HERE to read the report.

Today's issue of *PD*

Pharmacy Daily today has two pages of news.

Limit mask sales

PHARMACISTS are being urged to limit sales of N95/P2 face masks by Australia's Chief Medical Officer, Professor Brendan Murphy, to ensure they have sufficient stock available should the coronavirus spread.

The call comes amid reports of customers bulk-buying masks to ship overseas (*PD* yesterday).

Pharmaceutical Society of Australia National President, Dr Chris Freeman, has also advised pharmacists to avoid "short-term profiteering" adding pharmacists should think carefully about how many masks they are selling.

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Guild political donations top \$770k

THE Pharmacy Guild of Australia splashed more than \$770,000 on political parties in the 2018/19 financial year, data from the Australia Electoral Commission (AEC) reveals.

The Australian Labor Party received the bulk of the Guild's political donations in the lead up to last year's Federal election (\$590,811), while the coalition parties received a total of \$182,980, with the AEC recording no donations to minor parties

such as, One Nation or the Greens.

Australian Medical Association Western Australia Branch President, Dr Andrew Miller, questioned the Guild's motivation for making the donations in a post on Twitter.

"What does it buy?" he asked, before adding "smells like sports rorts".


A Guild spokesperson dismissed Miller's tweet as a "weird conspiracy theory".

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Read the Summer edition of *Travel & Cruise Weekly*

Dispensary Corner

PHARMACY owner, Robert Crockler, from North Carolina, US, will no longer be allowed to practice as a pharmacist after failing to spot a number of “red flags” when filling prescriptions for opioids and other controlled medications.

The US Drug Enforcement Administration took action against Crockler and his Farmville Discount Drug pharmacy, claiming he failed to ensure prescriptions for opioids were legitimate before dispensing them.

The News and Observer website noted one family had hundreds of scripts filled for pain medications including, oxycodone and hydrocodone, at the pharmacy.

“Prosecutors say the pharmacist looked past warning signs of ‘drug-seeking behavior’ when he filled prescriptions,” the website reported.

Court documents noted Crocker and his staff filled prescriptions for “highly abused prescription-drug cocktails for long-distance patients who saw a doctor an hour away and lived an hour away” from the pharmacy, while also dispensing scripts from “a prescriber that Crocker knew had been cut off from other pharmacies”.

The Court noted, “when other employees expressed concern to Crocker about Farmville Discount Drug’s practices, he dismissed them, saying that if a doctor wrote the prescription, the pharmacy would fill it”.

Crocker has also been fined US\$600,000.

SHPA's \$101m pitch

GREATER Federal Government funding for hospital and aged care pharmacy services could reap significant savings, the Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia (SHPA) believes.

In its pre-Budget submission the SHPA said clinical pharmacy services in hospital delivered savings of \$22 for every \$1 invested in hospital pharmacy through a combination of increased medicine optimisation, reduced prescribing, shorter length of stay and increased adherence.

The SHPA called for more than \$100 million to be invested in hospital and aged care pharmacy services annually, with the bulk of the funding to support the Society’s recommendation that aged care facilities should have one whole-time equivalent pharmacist for every 200 residents, to deliver evidence-based, best practice, clinical pharmacy services.

“Recent Australian evidence that highlighted that embedded clinical pharmacist services in aged care homes can reduce medication-related problems, polypharmacy and adverse medication events, while also being cost-effective,” the



SHPA submission said.

“Evidence from Victoria on a clinical pharmacy model in a home nursing service indicates a return on investment of \$1.54 for every \$1 spent is achieved through embedding pharmacists to improve medicines management.

“Clinical pharmacist services can improve medicines management through a range of patient-focused services that aim to minimise the inherent risks associated with medicines, ensure medicines are used appropriately and optimise health outcomes of the elderly.”

The SHPA also called for \$600,000 a year to support its ongoing activities, \$300,000 for a pharmacy workforce study and \$200,000 annually for an opioid stewardship support liaison role.

Fake doc fined

A VICTORIAN man has been found guilty of six charges relating to claiming to be a medical practitioner when he was not registered.

The Magistrates’ Court of Victoria heard Panayiotis Marlassi-Bouras had never been registered with the Medical Board of Australia despite attempting to pass himself off as a doctor.

The Court heard that in Jan and Feb 2019 Marlassi-Bouras advised one “patient”, who was a complainant in the case against him, to stop taking her epilepsy medication.

The presiding magistrate described Marlassi-Bouras’ actions as, “reckless” and “extremely dangerous”, before issuing a fine of \$10,000 and ordering him to pay the Australia Health Practitioner Regulation Agency’s costs of \$1,308.



Blackmores Pro price increase

WHOLESALE prices of Blackmores Professional practitioner-only supplements are set to rise by \$1.48 per product from 01 Apr.

Blackmores announced the increase yesterday noting “market pressures” had forced the increase, which will impact “the majority of products” in the range.

CLICK HERE for more.

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