

Pharmacy Daily today has
three pages of news.

COMPLEMENTARY medicine and disinfectant brands are being reminded “to be very careful when considering making therapeutic claims related to novel coronavirus”, after finding evidence that some products are being inappropriately promoted for the prevention or treatment of the virus in Australia.

The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) had warned customers to exercise caution when considering claims related to the coronavirus.

FEDERAL Health Minister, Greg Hunt, is urging State and Territory governments to act now to deliver a nationally integrated real-time prescription monitoring (RTPM) system to bolster medicines safety.

In comments reported by the *Sydney Morning Herald* and *The Age*, Hunt said moves were underway to fast-track the implementation of a national RTPM.

"The Commonwealth expects all States and Territories to integrate their systems by the end of the this year, if not the middle of this year, Hunt said.

Hunt's desire to see a national RTPM in place by the end of the year has been welcomed by the Pharmacy Guild of Australia, with Guild National President, George Tambassis saying "we have to get this done".

"We wholeheartedly welcome

25 to 40 packs per hour



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**COMPACT.
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ACCURATE.**



The South Australian Government allocated funding for an RTPM system to be developed in its 2018/19 Budget, but to date no timeframe for its implementation has been set.

A spokesperson for NSW Health Minister, Brad Hazard, confirmed work was underway in the state to develop a RTPM system (*PD* 19 Jul 2019), but no concrete date has been set for its introduction.

For temporary relief of minor skin irritation, itching, rashes† and sunburn



- ✓ Suitable for use on children aged 2 and above
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- ✓ Dissolved hydrocortisone to work fast

*Consult a doctor before use on children under 2 years of age.

DermAid 1.0% w/w: **ASK YOUR PHARMACIST – THEY MUST DECIDE IF THIS PRODUCT IS RIGHT FOR YOU.**

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When your customers reach out to you for a stronger eczema treatment, reach for Kloxema.



- ▶ Contains clobetasone butyrate 0.05% w/w, a moderate potency topical corticosteroid²
- ▶ Provides relief of inflammation and itch²
- ▶ Indicated for short term treatment of milder forms of eczema, dermatitis and other steroid responsive skin conditions²
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A step up from hydrocortisone, clobetasone is the highest strength topical corticosteroid you can recommend before a prescription is required.²

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Short term (up to 7 days) treatment of mild forms of eczema, dermatitis or other steroid responsive skin conditions. **Dosage:** For 12 years and over. Apply a thin film and gently rub in, using only enough to cover the affected area twice daily for up to 7 days. **Contraindications:** Klassema cream should not be used in conjunction with a history of hypersensitivity to clobetasone butyrate or any of the excipients. Rosacea, acne, perioral dermatitis, viral dermatitis. Untreated bacterial infections such as cellulitis, folliculitis, furunculosis or impetigo; Fungal infections such as those associated with itea (eg athlete's foot, jock itch); Viral infections including cold sores (herpes simplex), chicken pox or shingles (*Varicella zoster*) or vaccinia. Parasitic infections such as scabies. Do not use on broken or infected skin or on inflamed skin near chronic ulcers.

References: 1. Dermatology Expert Group. Therapeutic Guidelines: Dermatology, version 4. Topical corticosteroid preparations (Appendix 4.1). Therapeutic Guidelines Ltd [Internet]. 2019 [cited 2019 June 28]. Available from: <https://tguidexp.to.org.au/viewTopic?topicfile=topical-corticosteroid-preparations>
2. Xloxeem Cream Approved Product Information. 12 September 2017.

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AHPRA updates guidelines

THE Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) has released an advance copy of its revised mandatory notification guidelines and supporting resources.

The revisions follow amendments to the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law made last year.

Reputation depends on ethical pricing

COMMUNITY pharmacy's reputation depends on pharmacists acting fairly and ethically amid accusations that some groups have increased the prices of face masks in response to the coronavirus outbreak.

Pharmacy Guild of Australia National President, George Tambassis, described a report by Channel Nine's *A Current Affair* claiming pharmacies had dramatically increased their prices for P2 face masks and hand sanitisers, as "unfair".

"I have seen direct evidence of unconscionable increases in wholesale mask prices from some non-pharmacy suppliers, making it quite unfair to point the finger at pharmacies.

"However, it also needs to be said that pharmacies are under the public and media spotlight at the moment so we all need to be ensuring we act in the best interests of our patients, including through a fair and ethical approach to pricing such products.

"Our reputation depends on it."



Tambassis urged pharmacists to follow the Commonwealth Chief Medical Officer, Professor Brendan Murphy's recommendations that "the only people who should wear masks in relation to this virus are those who are unwell".

He added manufacturers of hand sanitiser, including Ego, have increased production in recent days to meet demand for the product.

During the *A Current Affair* report, pharmacists from TerryWhite Chemmart stores in Brisbane,

Sydney and Adelaide were accused of profiteering by dramatically increasing the prices of their P2 face masks, with one store allegedly charging customers up to \$700 for a box of 10 masks.

A joint statement Symbion and TerryWhite Chemmart said an internal investigation has been launched into the allegations.

In the statement Symbion also refuted suggestions that wholesalers were fuelling the price increases.

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Sigma to review franking credit position

PHARMACEUTICAL wholesaler, Sigma Healthcare, will not generate sufficient franking credits to pay a fully franked dividend for the 2020 Financial Year.

In a statement to the Australian Securities Exchange (ASX), Sigma said that while it was on target to deliver an underlying earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation guidance of approximately \$46-47 million for the current year, one-off costs associated with the transformation of the business



had impacted its ability to deliver a fully franked dividend.

Sigma CEO, Mark Hooper, said the business expected to see accelerated underlying earnings in 2021, stemming from the group's core business.

Guidance for FY21 will be provided next month.

PPA takes action

PHARMACISTS at Mater Health hospitals are dispensing prescription medicines at no cost to patients as part of a pay dispute.

The Professional Pharmacists Australia (PPA) led action is part of a campaign against a proposed new pay deal, which the union believes could see pay cut by 20%.

Pharmacists have warned strike action may be the next step if Mater does not review its position on the proposed cuts.



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Travel & Cruise Weekly



Dispensary Corner

THERE are certain medicines people just know, and while they may be famed for one use, they're not always prescribed for that purpose.

Pfizer's notorious brand of sildenafil, is a prime example of one such medication.

One US pharmacy worker took to Reddit to outline one awkward moment, where the wife of a nursing home residing patient called up to discuss his range of medications.

During the course of a phone call the woman went through a list of new medicines which had been prescribed for her husband in recent months, noting he had dropped a few of the really tiny blue ones, before asking what it was.

"Sildenafil," the pharmacist said.

"What is it?" the patient's wife asked again.

"Viagra," came the response, before the call dropped out.

An hour later a colleague spoke to the pharmacist asking if he had spoken to the woman about her husband.

It transpired the woman knew of Viagra's reputation as a treatment for erectile dysfunction, and had jumped to the assumption that her husband with mild Alzheimer's was using the drug to fuel a passionate affair in the nursing home.

The reality was the medication had been prescribed to manage his pulmonary hypertension.

However, the pharmacist was unable to confirm the patient wasn't philandering.

Pharmacists crisis roles

COMMUNITY pharmacists should be at the centre of State and Territory Governments' responses to disasters, Pharmacy Guild of Australia Victorian Branch President, Anthony Tassone, believes.

Responding to praise of the profession's response to the summer's bushfire crisis, by Victorian Health Minister Jenny Mikakos, and Nationals State MP, Melina Bath, Tassone stressed the importance of pharmacists being included in disaster planning.

"The experience recently with the Victorian bushfires is validation of the critical role community pharmacy can play having representation on such an emergency response group," he said.

"If other State and Territory Governments do not have community pharmacy representation as part of their emergency response – they simply must and should change this as a matter of urgency.

Speaking during a sitting of the State Legislative Council, Mikakos



thanked the Guild for its efforts to ensure pharmacists in bushfire-affected areas had adequate medical supplies during the crisis.

"I also want to commend them for providing financial relief to bushfire-affected patients who did not have the funds available to pay for their prescriptions."

While Bath said the Guild had done an "amazing job in getting supplies and prescriptions in where they are needed".

"We are grateful that Minister Mikakos took the time to acknowledge on the lasting record of the Victorian parliament the important role that our pharmacists have played in delivery of patient care during the Victorian bushfire disaster," Tassone said.

Win with freeze:frame

This week Pharmacy Daily and freeze:frame are giving readers the chance to win NEW WRINKLE BLOCK valued at \$69.

WRINKLE BLOCK blocks visible expression wrinkles up to 78% in 30 minutes without paralysing muscles. This fast-acting anti-ager delivers a near 40% wrinkle and 76% eye bag reduction in just 7 days. 2 powerful peptides simultaneously slow down expressions whilst charging skin with the energy to bounce back. Visit freeze-frame.com.au for more.

To win, be the first from NSW or ACT to send the correct answer to the question to comp@pharmacydaily.com.au

Name the 3 benefits of WRINKLE BLOCK after using it for 7 days.

Check here tomorrow for today's winner.



Weekly Comment

Welcome to Pharmacy Daily's weekly comment feature. This week's contributor is **Gerard Stevens, Managing Director at Webstercare.**



BOOSTING AGED CARE VIABILITY

SOMETIMES solutions to problems aren't as far away as they seem.

Many pharmacies view aged care home (ACH) services as a commercial risk. And there is no doubting the challenges.

The margins for medication supply to residents of ACHs continue to erode, yet most effort involves a professional obligation behind the actual supply - reconciling medication profiles. These significantly successful pharmacy services are largely unseen, yet remain virtually unfunded.

The current Commonwealth proposal to implement 60-day dispensing presents another commercial challenge. It also has serious clinical implications, with experiences from overseas demonstrating poor patient outcomes (*PD* 3 Feb).

These commercial and clinical pressures emphasise the onus on seeking ongoing efficiencies and reductions in patient risk. Yet it is easy to access market solutions that combine superior technology and dispense design for a highly standardised and predictable packing process.

Medication is tracked individually for full accountability of every single action. It also cuts back on stock and space, further boosting efficiencies and the viability for in-house packing.

In many cases only one or two new customers are needed to generate a massive boost in productivity and accuracy.