



Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today has two pages of news.

Sigma proud

PHARMACY wholesaler, Sigma Healthcare, is "humbled, grateful and proud of the efforts" of the people who have coordinated and delivered supplies to pharmacies and communities affected by the bushfires in NSW and Victoria.

In a statement issued yesterday, the wholesaler thanked the Pharmacy Guild of Australia, emergency services, military, police and the Federal Department of Health, for ensuring vital medications have reached those in need.

The company also noted the efforts of staff at Bairnsdale Amcal+ in supplying relief centres and supporting local GPs with filling scripts for patients in the area.

Normality returns to Capital Chemists

MANY pharmacies across bushfire-affected parts of NSW's south coast are operating "normally" for the first time in 10 days, Capital Chemists Group Business Manager, Andrew Topp, says.

After close to two weeks of working in crisis conditions, Topp said a break in the weather has allowed pharmacists in the group to take deliveries and operate as usual.

"As of 07 Jan, all of our stores are up and running 'normally' after what has truly been the most challenging 10 days many of us have ever experienced," he said.

"It should be noted that we have forgotten what 'normal' is, but compared to the last few days it has improved out of sight.

"We are very aware that the crisis is not over - but we have power, we have internet and computers, we have deliveries of urgent medicines and we can meet the healthcare needs of our valued customers, many of whom are doing it tough.

"Our thoughts are with the populations of all the towns affected and we are under no illusions that there is a hard road ahead for many.

"Over the coming weeks we at Capital Chemist Group will be assisting our stores in whatever ways we can to allow them to provide all the support they can give their communities.

"For all of those who have checked in, touched base, reached out or sent us positive thoughts over the past few days we send our heartfelt and grateful thanks.

"We are truly humbled by the kind wishes and caring words we have received in stores and at head office."

Mermibula-based pharmacist, Linda Badewitz-Dodd, told **Pharmacy Daily** the lull in fire conditions had allowed the pharmacy to replenish stocks of medications, with support from wholesalers and the NSW and Federal Departments of Health.

However, she noted "we're



heading into another really bad weekend", with forecasts warning extreme weather conditions will return later in the week.

MEANWHILE the Country Fire Association (CFA) in Victoria has issued 'Watch and Act' alerts for Bennies, Cheshunt, Cheshunt South, Edi, Edi Upper, King Valley, Myrrhe, Rose River, Whitfield and Whitlands, with multiple bushfires across the east of the state "not yet under control".

Pharmacists affected by the fires can contact the Pharmacists' Support Service on 1300 244 910.

CHF backs pharmacy for greater role

PHARMACISTS should have a greater role in disaster planning and more freedom to dispense medicines during emergencies, the Consumers Health Forum of Australia (CHF) believes.

In response to questions from **Pharmacy Daily**, CHF CEO, Leanne Wells, praised the efforts of numerous pharmacists in bushfire-affected areas.

"CHF acknowledges the central role pharmacists often play during disasters when other community health services are not available," she said.

"Pharmacists should be represented in planning for emergency supply and other disaster-linked issues.

"It is a source of both anxiety and health risk when people can't access essential medications during times of disaster, and we clearly need arrangements to prevent this occurring.



"The provision of extended dispensing by pharmacists during emergencies and the conditions under which this could occur requires expert consideration."

Former Pharmacy Guild of Australia National President, Kos Sclavos, told **Pharmacy Daily** that current emergency provisions were not made for the realities of modern pharmacy, with emergency supplies dispensed as private scripts.

"The whole system is reliant on pharmacists staying out of pocket," he said.

Blooms the Chemist \$50k fire donation

BLOOMS the Chemist is joining the bushfire disaster relief effort, donating \$50,000 to the Australian Red Cross Disaster Relief and Recovery Fund, to support those most in need.

In a post on LinkedIn, the pharmacy network also pledged 9,000 P2 face masks, with 4,000 to be made available to the

public free of charge, while the remaining 5,000 "will be donated to the appropriate authorities, ensuring these masks go to those who need them most".

The group also acknowledged its pharmacy staff for their "dedication and commitment during this time, be it through donations or opening after hours".

New business features available

Helping you promote your pharmacy & drive business





Dispensary Corner

WAREHOUSE operative, Tomas Toleikis, has been spared a criminal conviction after an Irish court found he had illegally imported 10,000 tablets containing sildenafil into the Emerald Isle.

Prosecution solicitor, Ronan O'Neill, told a sitting of the Dublin District Court that amongst Toleikis' haul of erectile dysfunction treatments were four brands, which had not been subjected to clinical trials or approved for use in Ireland.

Mesmerised by the large quantity of the medication Toleikis had ordered, presiding Judge Anthony Halpin asked, "these were not for personal use, I take it?"

"Sorry, I had to ask," he said.

The court was told Toleikis had planned to set up an online pharmacy of sorts to sell what he thought were herbal products for between \$1.60 and \$8 a tablet.

While the court could have come down hard on the Dubliner, with fines of up to \$68,000 for the 10 charges taken against him, Judge Halpin opted to apply a the Probation of Offenders Act, sparing Toleikis a conviction, if he paid the prosecution's costs of more than \$5,500, with the case adjourned for 12 months.



Face mask resupply brings joy

CANBERRANS are breathing a sigh of relief after more than 100,000 Commonwealth-funded P2 face masks have been delivered to pharmacies across the ACT for at risk patients, with the city's air quality set to deteriorate in the coming days as bushfire smoke returns to the capital.

The masks allocated for the ACT by the Federal Government over the weekend were distributed to the Territory's 80 pharmacies on Mon afternoon in a combined effort between the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) ACT Branch, the Pharmacy Guild of Australia ACT Branch and ACT Health, to ensure they can reach at-risk patients.

Guild ACT Branch President, Simon Blacker, said pharmacy staff and patients alike have welcomed the fresh stock of the masks.

"What I saw when I was delivering masks for vulnerable people to ACT community pharmacies was a

mixture of joy and relief that masks were arriving that would allow the pharmacy to be able to help their local communities and their local patients," he said.

"The teams of pharmacists and staff were excited to be empowered to help, and this is a common trait of all community pharmacies and those that work within them.

"By the time the task was completed [on Mon afternoon], we believe about one-third of masks had already been provided free of charge to members of our community, showing how urgent the need in Canberra was."

PSA ACT Vice President, Professor Mark Naunton, praised the efforts pharmacists in the Territory have made to support their efforts in recent days.

"In the ACT this week, pharmacists have stepped up to coordinate and provide access to protective masks for Canberrans most sensitive to smoke, such as



those over 65, pregnant women and people with chronic health conditions such as asthma and cardiovascular disease," he said.

"As we travelled around the city and visited each of Canberra's 80 pharmacies was a network of community pharmacists eager to help out and play a part in keeping Canberrans safe from the harmful effects of pollution.

"This is another example of the important role pharmacists play in responding to public health issues and natural disasters."

Kmart model a template for pharmacy?

HAVING transformed Kmart into one of Australia's most successful retailers, former CEO, Guy Russo, will explore how pharmacy owners can use embrace the business's strategy at the 2020 Australian Pharmacy Professional Conference (APP2020) on the Gold Coast.

Speaking ahead of the four-day event, starting 19 Mar, Russo said internal processes, workplace culture, and listening to feedback are essential components of a business's overall strategy.

"Unlike the businesses I've worked in, people actually need a pharmacy's products and services," he said.

"However, my basics still apply. Love your customers. Build a great culture. Plan your strategy and then execute.

"We put customers at the heart of what we're doing at Kmart. Our customers, suppliers and stakeholders had some of the best solutions for the problems we were encountering.

"I believe these core principles will be very relevant to community pharmacy in 2020 and beyond."

Earlybird savings are available for delegates who register before 30 Jan.

CLICK HERE to register and review the conference program.

iNova pulls out of Juno deal

INOVA Pharmaceuticals will pull the pin on its proposed acquisition of Juno PC (PD 20 Dec), the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) revealed.

The ACCC flagged concerns the deal could have restricted competition in the prescription weight-loss medication category, with Juno PC having developed a new patient-protected phentermine-based drug with the potential to rival iNova's brands.

The ACCC has discontinued its review of the deal as a result.