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## Today's issue of PD

*Pharmacy Daily* today has two pages of news, plus the MIMS July update.

## NSW fridge audit questioned

**PHARMACY** Guild of Australia NSW Branch President, David Heffernan, has no issue with NSW Health conducting audits of pharmacy vaccine fridges, but questions the decision to carry them out during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Speaking to *Pharmacy Daily*, Heffernan said it was important that pharmacists in NSW ensure their vaccine fridges meet state standards, which he noted are higher than QCPP.

"Bringing standards up to those of any GP will be important for NSW pharmacists if we are to get access to the National Immunisation Program," he said.

"I don't have a problem with audits, but doing an audit in this time I have questions with."

## Award rate rise 'better than expected'

A **PAY** increase of 1.75% for pharmacy employees covered in the Pharmacy Industry Award 2020 announced by the Fair Work Commission (FWC) is a positive result in the current climate, union group, Professional Pharmacists Australia (PPA) believes.

The union noted that the pay bump fell short of the 4% it had originally sought, however, "in the current economic and pandemic environment PPA believes that a 1.75% increase is probably better than expected".

The 1.75% increase is set to be implemented across industry awards, on a phased basis, with those that have experienced the biggest impact from the COVID-19 pandemic among the first to see their wages rise.

"The Pharmacy Industry Award is one of the first awards that the FWC has determined will have the increase apply from 01 Jul," the PPA said.

"So, unlike employees in many other industries you will receive your 1.75% increase in award minimum rates of pay on 01 Jul."

Other employees covered by industry awards will see the 1.75% pay increase implemented from 01



Nov or 01 Feb 2021, based on the impact of COVID-19 on their sector.

Under the decision full and part-time pharmacists hourly pay has increased to \$29.93, or \$37.41 for casuals, wages for experienced pharmacists (with at least four years full-time experience) has been set at a base hourly rate of \$32.78 for full and part-time employees, while casuals must be paid at least \$40.98 an hour.

A spokesperson for the Pharmacy Guild of Australia told *Pharmacy Daily* that it was reminding members whose employees are covered by the award to ensure they comply with the updated rates.

"[However] many pharmacies pay over the award," the spokesperson said.

The pay increase came as the latest round of penalty rate cuts came into effect yesterday, which has seen Sunday rates fall by 15% a year since 2017.

Under the revised Sun rates full and part-time pharmacy employees working between 7am and 9pm will be paid a penalty rate of 150% of their minimum hourly rate, a 15% decrease on the previous loading.

Casual employees will see Sun penalty rates fall from 190% between 01 Jul 2019 and 30 Jun to 175% from 01 Jul this year.

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## Dispensary Corner

**POTENTIALLY** its a less than hygienic plea for independence, but in the current climate taking a leak on Her Majesty's lawn seems a little off message.

With regular public conveniences closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Scottish joggers and walkers have taken to relieving themselves on the grounds of Balmoral Castle.

Members of Queen Elizabeth II's staff at her Scottish retreat have taken to Twitter earlier this week to highlight the issue.

"[We're] disappointed to see so many wipes discarded on the estate today," the official Balmoral Castle Twitter account said.

"Next to paths and monuments.

"Please remember there are no public toilets open for miles around at the moment."

In a separate tweet, a staff member explained there were environmental concerns noting "we are seeing a lot of non biodegradable wipes" being dumped on the grounds.

"Also people are choosing to relieve themselves next to busy paths and monuments rather than move a little bit further away to avoid contamination," the staffer said.



## MedAdvisor strikes US alliance

**DIGITAL** medication management company, MedAdvisor, is targeting growth in the US through a three-year strategic alliance agreement with payment and population health management provider, HMS.

The deal will enable a deep connection between HMS' health engagement solution, Eliza, and MedAdvisor's health programs to enable healthcare organisations including insurance companies to communicate proactively and deliver messages to patients, to improve overall health outcomes.

MedAdvisor CEO, Robert Read, said the alliance would generate new opportunities for the business, with the company forecasting a strong market appetite for its services, which "over time could represent a significant portion of the existing outreach volume".

"This deal opens up a new addressable patient population



beyond our existing partnerships," he said.

"It also adds the potential to bring a different sponsor for our health programs, in the US health insurer [market], while leveraging the same MedAdvisor global technology platform.

"HMS has a significant pipeline of opportunities to work collaboratively in the US and Australia and we look forward to

working with them under our new strategic alliance agreement."

MedAdvisor Chief Revenue Officer, Steve Watt, said the alliance "will help accelerate revenue growth and customer acquisition", with the deal extending MedAdvisor's reach in the US beyond pharmacies and pharmaceutical companies to include insurance companies and payors.

## End of an era in NSW pharmacy

**CHANGES** in the leadership of the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia NSW Branch, mark an end of an era, Pharmacy Guild of Australia NSW Branch President, David Heffernan, believes.

Acknowledging his close working relationship with former PSA NSW Branch President, Professor Peter Carroll, who stepped down from the role yesterday, Heffernan said the pair had formed a strong partnership.

"The relationship Peter and I had was probably the envy of the rest of the country in terms of PSA and Guild leaders," he said.

Heffernan told *Pharmacy Daily* that over the last three years two organisations had moved "away from the dark days" of tensions



between the two organisations in NSW, under the leadership of previous branch presidents.

Carroll has been elected as the NSW Board Appointed PSA Director, while also servicing as a Branch Vice President alongside Krysti-Lee Rigby, while Chelsea Felkai, has been appointed as Branch President (*PD* 05 Jun).

## Armed robbers threaten staff

**NSW** Police are hunting two men who threatened two female employees during a robbery at a suburban Sydney pharmacy.

The balaclava-covered bandits entered the PharmaSave store in Cherrybrook around 7.30pm on Tue, armed with a knife and demanded the two staff members open the safe.

The thieves tied the women's hands before making off with "items from the safe and an employee's handbag", police reported.

Neither of the employees were injured.

## New Products

- **Semaglutide (rys) (Ozempic)** is a glucagon-like peptide-1 (GLP-1) analogue that binds to and activates the GLP-1 receptor, the target for native GLP-1. GLP-1 is a physiological hormone that has multiple actions in glucose and appetite regulation, and in the cardiovascular system. The glucose and appetite effects are specifically mediated via GLP-1 receptors in the pancreas and the brain. GLP-1 receptors are also expressed in the heart, vasculature and immune system and kidney from where it may mediate cardiovascular and microvascular effects. Ozempic is indicated for the treatment of adults with insufficiently controlled type 2 diabetes mellitus as an adjunct to diet and exercise: as monotherapy when metformin is not tolerated or contraindicated; or in addition to other medicinal products for the treatment of type 2 diabetes. Ozempic solution for injection contains semaglutide (rys) 1.34 mg/mL and is available in a pack size of 1 prefilled pen containing 1.5 or 3 mL.

## New Indications

- **Teduglutide (Revestive)** is now indicated for the treatment of paediatric patients 2 years of age and above with short bowel syndrome who are dependent on parenteral support.
- **Ustekinumab (Stelara)** is now indicated for the treatment of adult patients with moderately to severely active ulcerative colitis.

## New Contraindications

- **Rivaroxaban (Xarelto)** is now contraindicated in patients undergoing dialysis or with severe renal impairment (ClCr < 15 mL/min).

*This list is a summary of only some of the changes that have occurred over the last month.  
Before prescribing, always refer to the full product information.*