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Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today has three pages of news including our weekly Health & Beauty feature plus a full page from Amcal.

Website winners

GUILD Digital and Gold Cross Products & Services say they were overwhelmed at the response to the recent call for submissions to the latest Digital Grants program (PD 20 Feb), with winners of Round 2 having now been finalised.

Trevor Clarkin, Gold Cross GM, said the huge response was "evidence that being digitally ready is the hottest issue to community pharmacies."

"Experts advise that without a website, a business is already losing customers because customers demand digital connections...Gold Cross is proud to support the grant recipients who are strengthening their business through this grant," he said.

Meet Guild Digital at APP - see gulddigital.com.au.

TGA monitoring potential shortages

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has advised it is actively monitoring the international manufacturing of medicines to determine any potential future impact to drug supply to Australian consumers.

The TGA is also liaising with pharmacists and other local suppliers to make sure the Australian market is well-stocked.

An update released yesterday confirms the TGA has not received any notification of medicine shortages in Australia that are a direct result of COVID-19, reiterating previous advice that "any stockpiling of medicines is unnecessary".

Yesterday's update comes after the agency last week released its first annual medicines shortage report (PD 04 Mar).

"Stockpiling by individuals could result in other consumers being unable to access particular medicines," the TGA warned.

"Stockpiling of any medicines at this time is not indicated and could result in patients not receiving the medicines that they require."

The TGA also provided an update on access to coronavirus tests,

medicines and vaccines, noting that on 31 Jan an emergency legislative exemption was made to facilitate necessary access to certain kinds of medical devices used for the diagnosis, confirmatory testing, prevention, monitoring, treatment or alleviation of novel coronavirus infection.

The TGA also noted that several possible new vaccine candidates were under development, with some already emerging, and being assessed in clinical trials for efficacy against coronavirus infection.

Some products such as complementary medicines or disinfectants are also being "inappropriately promoted" for the prevention of COVID-19 infections in Australia, the TGA added, urging consumers to exercise caution when considering advertising claims related to novel coronavirus.

MEANWHILE a new study released by Johns Hopkins University in the USA has suggested that quarantine periods for COVID-19 could be cut to five days, based on the average incubation period.

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Sigma cans conference

SIGMA Healthcare and the Amcal & Guardian National Council have this morning announced the postponement of the 2020 Amcal/Guardian Retail Conference, which was scheduled to take place on the Gold Coast next week.

The annual event is always timed for just before the Pharmacy Guild's annual APP conference, which is still going ahead from next Thu.

Kurt O'Brien, Head of Amcal and Guardian, said the decision to drop the Sigma event had been made to limit the potential risk to attendees, given the uncertainty over the spread of coronavirus in Australia.

"Our number one concern is the health and safety of our Amcal and Guardian franchise partners, their teams and the communities they serve," he said.

"Their role in the community is vital and it is important that we minimise potential risk of exposure to and spread of COVID-19 during these challenging times."

He said Sigma understands and supports the front-line role that its pharmacists play.

"It is important they remain in their local communities offering help and support where it will have the most impact," O'Brien added.



Amcal and Guardian members who had planned to attend the Sigma conference will be given details of new initiatives directly by Sigma, along with all member pharmacies of the banner groups.

Sigma said it would continue to monitor the situation and consider alternative dates.

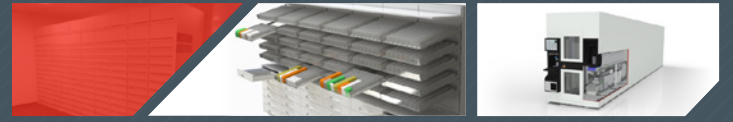
The company congratulated pharmacies across Australia for their efforts in the last six months, firstly to support the health of their customers during the bushfires and now looking after communities during a time of extreme uncertainty due to coronavirus.

"If there is one certainty in these difficult times it is that your local pharmacy will always be on hand to support the community," the company said.

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New OSA study

AN OBSTRUCTIVE Sleep Apnoea (OSA) diagnosis is crucial to sleep health, according to new research released by Philips.

Ahead of World Sleep Day this Fri 13 Mar, the findings show that over half of the population is dissatisfied with their sleep (55%), while more than a third of those (38%) admitting to having done nothing about the issue.

The study also found 80% of sleep apnoea sufferers remain undiagnosed, despite the condition affecting up to 10% of the adult population.

Concerned consumers can take an online test **HERE** to help understand their risk for OSA.

Philips Australia MD for Australia and NZ warned that if left untreated, sleep apnoea can have serious short and long-term health risks including heart disease, type 2 diabetes, stroke and high blood pressure.

Sufferers are urged to speak to their health professional about getting a diagnosis and treatment.

F is for fake...



THE Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) is highlighting the necessity of being able to spot a counterfeit medicine, and is challenging health professionals as to whether they can identify which of the above medicines is real.

An update on the TGA website this week notes that comparison against a legitimate medicine is the quickest way to spot a fake.

"Medicines are manufactured with precision, so any variation in size, weight, colour, quality or embossing could indicate a forgery," the TGA said.

"We use laboratory tests to assess suspected counterfeits... our analytical chemistry techniques profile the ingredients and potency of these medicines, which can confirm that a medicine is a fake."

And the answer? The pill on top identifies itself as legitimate through the more accurate company logo, while the bottom two pills have a greyish-blue colour and rougher edges.

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Dispensary Corner

THE next time you hear yourself muttering the words, "I'd kill for a doughnut", maybe don't say it with too much gusto when visiting the US state of Oregon.

A 40-year-old man, whose sweet cravings were evidently at fever pitch, recently robbed a Voodoo Doughnut store armed with an axe, making off with one box of the sweet treats.

Nobody was hurt in the disturbance, but when police were called to investigate the robbery, they were surprised to stumble across the man vigorously scoffing down several doughnuts from a rather large and luminous pink box.

We hope he enjoyed the indulgent feed, because we can confirm the Oregon County Jail does not have a Voodoo Doughnut store in its mess hall.



IT IS a tragedy to hear that the South Boston St Patrick's Day has been canned because of the risk of spreading COVID-19, but perhaps there is an upside from a health perspective?

Although not accounting for the total volume, Boston's celebration of all things Irish contributes greatly to the estimated 13 million pints of Guinness consumed worldwide during the celebratory day.

If you ask us, it needed the luck of the Irish to avoid that kind of punishment for everybody's collective livers.

NEW PRODUCTS

Suppliers wanting to promote products in this feature should email newproducts@pharmacydaily.com.au



Malarkey Baby Munch Mitt

The Munch Mitt is the world's first silicone wearable teething mitten, made of 100 per cent food-grade silicone and BPA, latex and phthalate-free. Recently featured on Today Extra and voted the number 1 product by Parent's Top Picks!

The patented and award-winning mitt also offers three-way sensory stimulation. The textured, silicone massages their gums, the crinkle sound of the glove stimulates their hearing along with the bright colours and patterns offering visual stimulation. It's also machine washable and available in 9 colours!

Malarkey Kids are leaders in fun and functional kids products, including the featured Number 1 selling Munch Mitt, Chew Cube and Munch-It Blanket range. Visit Stand #394 and 395 at upcoming APP Conference to find out more about the Malarkey Kids range.

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Other uses for the Medichoice Eucalyptus Spray includes - surface spray, room freshener, deodorising, antifungal and relaxation. Stock is available through API (PDE 57660) and DHL (PDE 518409).

Stockist: Stock has just arrived and is now available through API and DHL

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