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Free flights for pharmacists!

QATAR Airways has announced a global 100,000 ticket giveaway for frontline healthcare professionals - including pharmacists - to thank them for their hard work during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The offer includes two complimentary Economy Class return tickets on Qatar Airways, with pharmacists and other health workers able to register now at qatarairways.com/ThankYouHeroes.

Qatar Airways is one of the few airlines across the globe which has maintained operations through the pandemic, with the carrier continuing to operate to Australia to carry vital cargo and essential travellers.

The flight giveaway is available across the globe until midnight on 18 May (Doha time), with each country across the globe to receive a daily allocation of tickets, depending on its population size.

Healthcare professionals who receive the promotional code from the website can book free flights to anywhere on the airline's extensive global network, which is gradually being reintroduced and will comprise 80 destinations by the end of Jun.

Tickets must be booked before 26 Nov, for travel until 10 Dec 2020, and will be fully flexible with an unlimited number of date or destination changes allowed without any fees payable.

Blackmores podcast is live

BLACKMORES Institute has debuted a new "Natural Health Simplified" podcast, in response to a strong consumer appetite for practical natural healthcare information.

Blackmores Institute Director, Lesley Braun, said the organisation's pharmacy advisory board had highlighted that in a busy pharmacy, pharmacists don't always have the time for an in-depth discussion about diet, lifestyle and nutritional choices.

"They suggested people are looking for easy-to-digest, reliable information they can access while commuting or going for a walk," she said.

"That's why we have developed the podcasts, in which both customers and pharmacists should find something useful," she said.

The weekly podcast features Lesley Braun and her team at the Blackmores Institute, discussing simple science-based strategies and tips.

The segments are 10-15 min long, with the first series launching with four episodes exploring the "Immune Essentials".

Future topics will feature seasonal issues such as coughs and colds, and also cover common queries such as "where's the evidence" to help sort fact from fiction - see blackmoresinstitute.org.

TGA issues \$150k COVID-19 fine

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has issued infringement notices totalling more than \$150,000 for the alleged unlawful advertising of a product called Miracle Mineral Supplement (MMS), including treatment claims relating to COVID-19.

The move follows a TGA safety alert published last week to warn consumers about online claims about the product about the treatment, cure, prevention or alleviation of disease.

"There is no clinical, scientifically-accepted evidence showing that MMS can cure or alleviate any disease," the TGA said.

"The use of MMS presents serious health risks and can result in nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea and severe dehydration, which in some cases can result in hospitalisation."

The product is being promoted by a company called Southern Cross Directories Pty Limited, trading as MMS Australia which also describes

itself as a "Health Church".

The TGA said MMS was often marketed as "water purification drops" and contains a high concentration of sodium chlorite, a chemical used as a textile bleaching agent and disinfectant.

Because MMS Australia has promoted the product as being for therapeutic uses, it is subject to the *Therapeutic Goods Act 1989*.

The infringement notices were based on alleged contraventions of the Act and the *Therapeutic Goods Advertising Code (No. 2) 2018* in relation to advertisements that included prohibited representations (such as for HIV/AIDS and cancer), restricted representations (e.g. diabetes, Parkinson's and arthritis), implied that a health practitioner had endorsed a product, and included a testimonial where the person giving the testimonial "appears to be directly involved with the production, sale, supply or marketing of the goods".

Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today has two pages of news.

Rental advisory service launches

THE newly introduced Mandatory Code for Commercial Leasing provides an unprecedented opportunity for tenants to restructure their rent over the next few years at very favourable terms, according to lawyer Mike Pym, who has launched a new service designed to help small businesses survive the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Code applies to SMEs with a turnover of less than

\$50m per annum who have suffered hardship due to COVID-19, with tenants entitled to a rent reduction equal to the percentage their turnover has been reduced.

"Even on leases of \$12,000 per month, the rent reduction and deferral can be worth more than \$100,000," Pym said.

Details and a rent reduction calculator are available online at www.c19rentreviews.com.au.

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Dispensary Corner

IT LOOKS like some people actually want to contract coronavirus.

Security videos released by the Los Angeles North County Correctional Facility show attempts by inmates to become infected, by sharing drinking containers and taking turns breathing into a shared mask.

Local Sheriff Alex Villanueva said the COVID-19 conspiracy to an outbreak which ultimately saw 30 people test positive.

"Somehow there was some mistaken belief among the inmate population that if they tested positive there was a way to force our hand and somehow release more inmates out of our jail environment - and that's not gonna happen," he said.

However officials have been forced to dramatically change prison practices due to COVID-19, with over 4,500 inmates currently in quarantine after being in close contact with someone who either tested positive or is waiting for a result.

MEDICATION home delivery services have taken off during the pandemic - and we don't just mean legal pharmaceuticals.

Interpol has issued an official warning about criminal gangs using fast food delivery services to distribute recreational drugs to people in lockdown.

A "purple notice" from Interpol details the rising practice in a range of countries including the UK, Ireland, Spain and even Malaysia, saying food orders provide the "perfect cover for home drug deliveries".

Flu shots spike - MedAdvisor



LISTED pharmacy technology provider MedAdvisor says there's been an early boost in influenza immunisations this year, as Australians rush to have their jabs in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

CEO Robert Read said the company's data - based on the pharmacies which use the MedAdvisor PlusOne platform - shows "demand is far exceeding previous years."

"People are also getting the shot much earlier than the regular peak demand month which is usually May. As we work to flatten the COVID-19 curve, we

also need to stay on top of the flu curve this winter," he said.

The MedAdvisor figures indicate a massive increase in Mar, with less than 10,000 immunisations undertaken last year, compared to around 80,000 in Mar 2020.

And in Apr the company's data indicates almost 300,000 flu jabs this year, around four times the Apr 2019 figure of 75,000.

MedAdvisor noted that the uptick in demand came amid the expansion of the vaccination role for pharmacists in NSW and Vic, bringing them in line with colleagues in the ACT, SA and Tas.

FDA speeds COVID-19 study applications

THE US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has issued new guidance with recommendations for researchers working on prevention and treatment options for COVID-19.

The protocols aim to make the process for submitting applications

to initiate studies for new drugs and biological products more efficient, as well as suggesting ways to design clinical trials to evaluate the safety and effectiveness of any new products for the treatment of coronavirus infection.

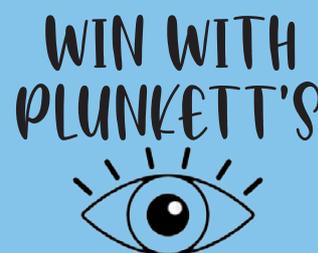
See the guidance at fda.gov.

UK mask mandate

THE British Department of Health has issued a new advisory, saying members of the public should wear face coverings in "enclosed public spaces" such as pharmacies.

Masks are recommended in situations where it "could be difficult to follow social distance measures and keep two metres apart," according to a spokesperson quoted in *Chemist+Druggist*.

The advice also discourages consumers from purchasing medical grade masks.



Everyday this week Pharmacy Daily and Plunkett's are giving away a SuperLift Collagen Eye Lift worth RRP\$39.95

John Plunkett's SuperLift Collagen Eye Lift is a day and night eye cream packed with peptides including Matrixyl 3000 and Eyeseryl to boost collagen by 100%, and Hyaluronic Acid to provide cushioning hydration, while Rosehip Oil softens and smoothes delicate skin around the eyes.

Effectively targets three causes of ageing - fine line and wrinkles, eyebags and puffiness and dark circles. For more information [click here](#).



Q: In which country is John Plunkett's Super Cosmeceuticals made?

To win send the correct answer to comp@pharmacydaily.com.au