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Aggressive behaviour unacceptable

PHARMACIST, Ahmed Ouf, is calling for the profession to be given greater protection after being the victim of a violent incident in a late night pharmacy in Western Sydney on Mon night.

Video footage showed a patient pacing around the store before Ouf called him to the dispensary at the Pharmacy4Less in Auburn.

Ouf then handed the man a piece of paper, before the patient lashed out slamming his hand against a perspex sneeze guard, knocking it over on top of the pharmacist.

"I've been attacked verbally lots of times but as a health care professional who is on the frontline, I never thought that this would happen to me," Ouf said.

"This should not happen to anyone at his workplace.

"We need more protection."

Professional organisations, the Pharmacy Guild of Australia, the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA), and union group, Professional Pharmacists Australia, (PPA) have been united in condemning the patient's behaviour.

Guild National President, George Tambassis, said he was "disturbed" to hear of the attack on Ouf, describing it as "unacceptable".

"Pharmacists and pharmacy staff will not and should not be expected to endure aggression and threatening abuse from a tiny minority of Australians who are engaging in this behaviour," he said.

"The safety and wellbeing of our staff and other patients is paramount."

PSA National President, Associate Professor Chris Freeman, said that while the impacts of the COVID-19 were "bringing many to breaking point...there is no excuse for abusive and dangerous behaviour that puts pharmacists and pharmacy staff at risk".

"Like all frontline workers, pharmacists and pharmacy staff should feel safe at work, whether that be in a community pharmacy, hospital pharmacy or other patient-facing role," he said.

"It is time to send a strong message to the community that violence and threats are unacceptable."

PPA President, Geoff March, described the video footage as "frightening", adding, "members are reporting an increase in aggressive behaviour by customers" in recent months.

He urged pharmacy owners and



employees to understand their rights and obligations under the Work Health and Safety Act, and suggested that having a security presence at the entry to the store and signage noting the use of CCTV could deter aggressive behaviour.

Responding to news of the incident a NSW Health spokesperson told **Pharmacy Daily** the State Government recognised the role of community pharmacists as frontline health workers supporting their communities.

"The community should be respectful of people who hold a very special place on the frontline of our fight to keep the community safe and well," the spokesperson said.

Today's issue of **PD**

Pharmacy Daily today features three pages of news.

Rego renewal

THE Pharmacy Board of Australia's online registration renewal platform is now open.

General and non-practising pharmacists have until 30 Nov to renew their registration.

CLICK HERE for more.

CHP Australia
Industry Update

2020 Virtual Diamond Awards

Date: 12 November 2020

Time: 3.30pm to 4.30pm approx.

Free Event: [Click here to register](#)

Guest speaker: Gary Bertwistle

Topic: The Pandemic Stole My Mojo, What Do I Do Now?

The Diamond Awards celebrate marketing & sales excellence in the consumer healthcare products industry.

The Marketing awards, judged by a panel of external industry experts, recognise campaigns that are not only innovative and compelling, but also support the quality use of medicines and marketing best practice.

The Sales awards are based on an independently run quantitative survey of pharmacies across Australia. They are asked to rank product sponsors on various important attributes, including their customer service and contribution to improving consumer health literacy.

The Diamond Awards offer an opportunity to showcase the strong work that has continued during this tumultuous year!

Don't miss out - [Register here](#)

Nardil substitutes

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has authorised two sponsors to supply an overseas-registered brand of phenelzine following the discontinuation of Nardil (phenelzine sulfate) in Jul.

Under the decision Phenelzine Sulfate USP 15mg has been approved for use in Australia, however the TGA noted it is not subsidised under the PBS.

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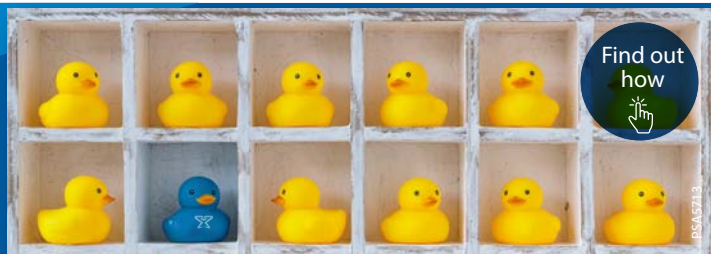
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Sydney to join e-script rollout: ADHA

PATIENTS across metropolitan Sydney will soon have the option to have their prescriptions issued in an electronic format, the Australian Digital Health Agency (ADHA) announced this morning.

The move will see electronic prescriptions introduced to communities across the city from Hornsby in the north, south to Campbelltown and to Penrith in the west, over the next month, as part of the staged national rollout.

ADHA CEO, Amanda Cattermole, said close to 400,000 e-scripts have been issued since the token model was launched in May (PD 08 May), with the agency working with the Pharmacy Guild of Australia, the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia, the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners and the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine, to prepare practitioners to issue and dispense

the new prescription format.

The rollout of e-scripts in Sydney follows their introduction across Victoria in Sep in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, when the state was designated as a Community of Interest under ADHA's trial program (PD 24 Sep).

Guild National Councillor and Sydney-based pharmacist, Catherine Bronger welcomed the move to enable patients to access e-scripts in the city.

"Community pharmacies across Sydney have been working to upgrade their dispensing software and review their in-pharmacy workflow to get ready for electronic prescriptions," she said.

"The Guild looks forward to further releases of electronic prescriptions functionality providing more convenience for patients, especially those who are on multiple medicines."



Initially, e-scripts will be issued via email or text message using the token system ahead of the launch of the Active Script List model, which is due to be introduced later this year.

While e-scripts will become available to patients in Sydney over the coming weeks, they will retain the option to have prescriptions issued in paper.

Three sign vaping petition

MOVES to ban the importation of e-cigarettes containing vapouriser nicotine are "unjust and anti-Australian", according to a petition presented to the Federal Parliament this week.

The petition, signed by three people, called on the House of Representatives to reject the planned import ban, that would see liquefied nicotine become Prescription Only, from 01 Jul 2021.

The signatories accused politicians of "using COVID-19 restrictions to force through draconian legislation and regulation changes through a barely functioning political system", warning the ban "persecutes the poor, the disabled and pensioners".

TWC starts prep for 2021 vax season

TERRYWHITE Chemmart (TWC) is aiming to boost its vaccination capacity ahead of the 2021 influenza season, the group's Chief Pharmacist, Brenton Hart, says.

Speaking after the first TWC virtual Masterclass Forum, held online yesterday, Hart stressed the need to prepare for future vaccination campaigns.

"We have all just come off the back of the biggest influenza season we have seen in terms of vaccinations and we are preparing to build on this again in 2021," he said.

"We have to prepare now for all scenarios and that is why we are investing in a significant amount of resources and training



to ensure our network of pharmacists are ready.

"We received extremely positive customer satisfaction responses last year and we're going to do our best to improve again in 2021."

The Masterclass Forum also provided an update on electronic prescriptions, the Queensland UTI pilot trial and upskilling and building capacity to assist communities through Mental Health First Aid training.

COVID hits Boots' non-pharmacy sales

BRITISH pharmacy chain, Boots, has reported a 19% slump in retail sales for the 2020 financial year, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Parent company, Walgreens Boots Alliance, reported non-pharmacy-related sales plummeted by 48% in the third quarter, compared to the same period in 2019, while Q4 saw a 29% fall in sales.

In a market update, the group noted that retail sales had "sequentially improved as foot traffic slowly returned... major high street and 'travel' locations remained challenging".

While bricks and mortar stores have been hit by the impacts of COVID-19-related restrictions,



the Boots.com e-commerce platform had seen sales soar by 155% in Q4, following a 78% jump in Q3.

The FY20 results announcement also noted that Boots had played a "key role in supporting National Health Service (NHS) [COVID] testing, with more than a million tests conducted across 52 sites.

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Dispensary Corner

FACE masks are an important tool in containing COVID-19, yet many people are still to master the art of wearing them correctly.

We've all seen someone with a mask draped from ear to ear acting more like some sort of cheap and no doubt ineffective anti-snoring contraption, covering their chin and nothing else, or the individual who has pulled the mask down to cover their mouth, but not their nose - because their glasses get fogged up.

Well, one Welsh pharmacist has enlisted the help of a friendly spaniel to demonstrate the many ways one can wear a face mask in a completely pointless manner, and the one method that appropriately covers both nose and mouth.

Using her pharmacy's Facebook page, Gwawr Davies Jones, has reached more than a million people, and has hopefully improved the use of masks.

Dispelling rumours that you shouldn't work with animals, Davies Jones, reported that the photo shoot took just three minutes with the pup a perfect model.



COVID challenges traditional training

NEW-LOOK pharmacy training tools including role-play videos used during COVID-19 lockdowns are boosting the skills of pharmacists in training, research from Monash University reveals.

In a paper published in *Pharmacy Education Development*, researchers from Monash University's Faculty of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences noted restrictions related to COVID-19 had led to changes in their approach to conducting Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs), used to assess students' communication skills.

Ordinarily conducted in a face-to-face format, the Monash team introduced a video-recording assessment, allowing students to submit a video of them educating a simulated patient on a medicines list.

The authors noted that COVID restrictions had seen students rely on housemates and family members to play the roles of



patients, which has had the knock-on effect of boosting their health literacy.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has challenged the traditional framework of our education system, spurring educators around the world to make systematic yet strategic innovations in their teaching and learning methods," they said.

"Pharmacy education in particular,

has witnessed a remarkable shift during this unprecedented time, creating meaningful and relevant opportunities for students to prepare themselves for the imminent digitalisation of healthcare.

"Introducing students to simulation activities via telehealth to increase health literacy is clearly a silver lining in this extraordinary circumstance."

Choroquine plea

FEDERAL MP, Craig Kelly, has reiterated calls for restrictions on the prescribing of anti-malarial drug, hydroxychloroquine, to be eased, to allow patients with COVID-19 to be treated with it.

Speaking in the House of Representatives yesterday, Kelly accused state Chief Medical Officers of denying patients "access to a potentially life-saving medical treatment".

The World Health Organization found hydroxychloroquine does not reduce mortality in hospitalised COVID patients.

Win With Plunkett's

Everyday this week Pharmacy Daily and Plunkett's are giving away a Hi-Potency Aloe Vera set worth RRP\$24.75

Aloe Barbadensis 'natures medicine plant' is renowned for its soothing, cooling and hydrating properties. Plunkett's Hi-Potency Aloe Vera Soothing & Hydrating Moisturiser and Facial Sheet Mask are fragrance, colour and paraben free and contain pure certified organic Aloe Vera extracted from Aloe Barbadensis Leaf - rich in vitamins, minerals, amino acids and anti-oxidants to restore dry and damaged skin all year round.



Q: Does Plunkett's Aloe Vera contain any fragrance?

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