

Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features three pages of news.

SHPA honours Curtin's Hughes

FORMER Curtin University School of Pharmacy Head, Professor Jeff Hughes, has been named as the winner of the Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia's (SHPA) 2020 Fred J Boyd Award.

The award recognises Hughes' commitment to excellence in teaching, learning and innovation, alongside his accomplishments as "an outstanding pharmacy practitioner, educator and researcher".

Hughes was also commended for his strong evidence-based, patient-centred approach to improving healthcare outcomes through excellence in pharmacy practice.

Hughes will formally accept the award during the 2020 SHPA Virtual Congress on 21 Nov, and deliver the Fred J Boyd Oration.

Pharmacists deserve respect: Guild

THROUGH bushfires, drought, floods and COVID-19 pharmacists have gone above and beyond for their communities, and do not deserve to be subjected to threatening behaviour, Pharmacy Guild of Australia Executive Director, Suzanne Greenwood, believes.

Writing the Guild's *Forefront* newsletter, Greenwood described video footage of a violent incident at a pharmacy in Auburn, NSW (PD 21 Oct), as "shocking and disturbing", as a patient hit a perspex sneeze guard, knocking it over on top of pharmacist, Ahmed Ouf.

"This year has highlighted the lengths that community pharmacies go to in order to help the communities they serve," she said.

"With drought, bushfires, floods and COVID-19, the pressure on pharmacists has been relentless but the sector has never faltered in its commitment to do the best for patients.

"This is reflected in the fact that across Australia, thousands of community pharmacies have remained open to serve patients and dispense vital medicines and health services throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.



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"Pharmacies have gone above and beyond to serve patients because they are connected to their communities and committed to the health needs of their patients.

"They have remodelled their pharmacies to ensure the safety of staff and patients and this commitment to their critical primary healthcare role makes it all the more disturbing to see an attack such as occurred this week in Sydney."

Greenwood noted that while the majority of patients behave appropriately in pharmacies, the encounter in the suburban Sydney store was "not an isolated incident".

"Quite clearly, community

pharmacists providing medicines and advice to patients across Australia deserve to be treated with respect," she said.

"They should not – and must not – be subjected to abusive behaviour from any patients.

"At the Guild, we stress that pharmacists and pharmacy staff must not be expected to endure aggression and threatening abuse from a tiny minority of Australians who are engaging in this behaviour.

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

"Fortunately, most patients know the value and quality of their local pharmacy and respect their pharmacist and pharmacy staff."



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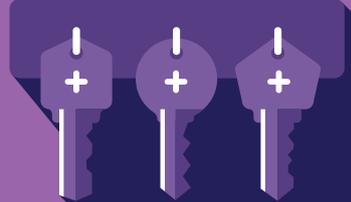
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API records COVID-induced loss

PHARMACY wholesaler, Australian Pharmaceutical Industries (API) has reported a \$7.9 million post tax loss for the 2020 Financial Year, with its Priceline Pharmacy banner group seeing gross profit fall by 14.3% due to the impacts of COVID-19.

API revealed underlying earnings before interest and tax, was \$56.3 million for the year to 31 Aug, down 40.1%, while total group revenue was \$4 billion, up 0.2%, despite COVID lockdowns.

Announcing its full year results to the Australian Securities Exchange (ASX) API revealed Priceline's total network sales for the year to 31 Aug were \$2 billion - down 5.2% on 2019, with front of shop sales slipping by almost 6%, while dispensary sales declined by 2.6% for the same period.

API CEO, Richard Vincent, said the dip in profits reflected a move

away from high margin categories including cosmetics and cold and flu medications as a result of COVID-19.

"This result reflects the strength of the Priceline Pharmacy brand, given that 22 of our non-pharmacy stores were closed during the mandated Victorian closures of non-essential retail," he said.

"Also those Priceline Pharmacy stores located in the nation's CBDs or in non-grocery sections of major shopping centres saw sharp drop-offs in foot traffic during the pandemic's worst periods."

While COVID hit Priceline, Vincent told the market that API's pharmacy distribution business had experienced a strong second half of FY20, with total revenue for the division up 6.1% on the prior corresponding period, winning new business during the year.

"We recently won the largest



pharmacy banner in Western Australia, the 777 Group, with over 60 pharmacies, which will benefit us in FY21," he said.

Vincent added that the division had achieved efficiencies by closing distribution centres in Canberra and Newcastle, consolidating their volumes in its Camellia, NSW, operation.

FIP Africa report

THE International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) has released a new report on how sub-Saharan Africa's healthcare challenges can be addressed with pharmacy education reform - see fip.org.

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Hearing Australia

AMCAL and Guardian Pharmacies have partnered with Hearing Australia in an exclusive national campaign offering free hearing checks in-store and via tele-screening.

Available through until Dec in selected pharmacies, the initiative follows findings from last year's Amcal and Guardian hearing clinic campaign which found almost half of those screened were from groups at high risk of hearing loss.

Last year's program in Sep 2019 screened almost 4,000.

Purdue plea leaves Sacklers on the line

PURDUE Pharma's US\$8 billion settlement for its part in the US's opioid epidemic will not free the company's owners, members of the Sackler family from criminal liability, *AP* reports.

The company is set to plead guilty to three counts of conspiracy to defraud the US and violating Federal anti-kickback legislation, with details of the deal to be revealed in a bankruptcy court filing.

AP reported that Purdue will pay US\$225 million directly to the Government, as part of a US\$2



billion criminal forfeiture, with the company also facing a US\$3.54 billion criminal fine, adding the drug maker is set to agree to pay US\$2.8 billion in damages to resolve its civil liability.

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APC adds Heck's Indigenous voice



THE Australian Pharmacy Council (APC) has announced the addition of Chastina Heck as the newest member of its Improving Indigenous Health Strategy Expert Advisory Group.

Heck (**pictured**) is a Nywaigi, Mamu, Bidjara woman who is currently working as a clinical pharmacist at the Logan Hospital in Brisbane.

She's also a Conjoint Associate Lecturer in the School of Pharmacy in the University of Queensland, and is "passionate about sharing her stories of knowing, being and doing pharmacy and healthcare business especially in regard to the health and wellbeing of Australia's First Peoples".

It's a year since the Advisory Group was formed, with its advice key to APC's ongoing project to adapt the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Curriculum framework for pharmacy.

APC CEO Bronwyn Clark said the body's voice was "absolutely necessary to ensure the best outcomes for future pharmacists and their role in improving health for First Australians".

NZ moves to codeine scripts

NEW Zealand's Medsafe regulator has confirmed that all codeine-containing medicines will be classified as prescription medicines effective from 05 Nov this year.

The change, foreshadowed earlier this year (**PD** 29 Jul), is in line with a recommendation from the NZ Medicines Classification Committee on 10 Oct 2019, and follows a similar move in Australia which became effective in Feb 2018.

The Committee's chair Andi Shirtcliffe said "people need access to knowledge and advice from their health professionals when choosing medication to treat their pain".

The implementation was planned for earlier this year, but NZ's response to COVID-19 has led to the delay, with Medsafe continuing to work with industry representatives and other stakeholders.

"I know during the planning for this change, the Medicines Classification Committee has listened to concerns about the availability of alternatives and



potential for increased workloads on health professionals," according to Medsafe Group Manager Chris James.

"Reports from Australia suggest those concerns haven't been realised. It's important for people to know there are alternatives available for your pain management - both over the counter and as prescription medicines," he added.

Australia's move to up-schedule low-dose codeine products was controversial, with the Pharmacy Guild and other industry groups claiming it had done little to tackle addiction (**PD** 04 Oct 2019).

Dispensary Corner



IT'S all in a name for the Canadian locality of Asbestos, where the residents have just voted for a less carcinogenic title for their home town.

About 7,000 people live in the community about 160km east of Montreal, which was named after the mineral, known as "white gold", which formed the economic foundation for the region for over 100 years.

Rather than being called Asbestos, the Quebec locality is being renamed Val-des-Sources, or French for Spring Valley.

The change was confirmed by local Mayor Hugues Grimard, who said it was a "very emotional subject".

Asbestos was built around the Jeffrey Mine, which was once the biggest source of asbestos in the world, before the World Health Organization declared that it caused cancer in 1987.

In a campaign to promote the name change city officials noted on Facebook that "the word 'Asbestos' unfortunately does not have a good connotation, particularly in English-speaking circles".

A name change was first proposed in 2006, but the plan was abandoned after receiving minimal support from locals proud of their asbestos heritage.

However in the most recent poll Val-des-Sources was chosen having received just over 51% of the votes.

The name change is now expected to be formalised before the end of the year, with Grimard saying "it'll be a nice Christmas present".

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

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