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Vic Budget needs pharmacy focus

WITH Victoria's roadmap to recovery laid out by Premier, Daniel Andrews, the State Government is being urged to implement small business support packages that extend to community pharmacies.

Welcoming the winding back of restrictions across the state, Pharmacy Guild of Australia Victorian Branch President, Anthony Tassone, told *Pharmacy Daily* that many businesses had suffered through the COVID-19 lockdown, and would need assistance to ensure their

continued viability.

Tassone said many retailers in CBD locations and large shopping centres had been "crippled" by the restrictions imposed during the second wave of the virus, with pharmacies far from immune to the "devastating economic impacts that this pandemic has inflicted".

"The Victorian Government, through the State Budget must be ready to support small businesses to recover from this pandemic, and that includes pharmacies even though they were permitted to open

during the restrictions," he said.

With the permitted worker scheme coming to an end at midnight tonight, and the 'ring of steel' around Melbourne set to be lifted from 08 Nov, Tassone called for borders to be reopened.

"We are one state again, but now it is time to become one nation again, and lift border restrictions between our states and territories," he said.

"The border restrictions have made it very difficult for regional pharmacies to arrange locum pharmacists and for pharmacy owners residing in Victoria to visit pharmacies they may own interstate.

"Victoria has been separated from the nation for long enough.

"Victorians have done our bit.

"We crushed the second wave and there should be every effort by the other states to open their borders to Victoria as soon as possible."



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!

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Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features three pages of the latest pharmacy news, plus the October MIMS update.

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Blackmores signs sale deal

BLACKMORES has signed a business sale agreement this morning that will see McPherson's Limited acquire the Global Therapeutics business.

In a statement to the Australian Securities Exchange, Blackmores said the transaction is worth \$27 million, and includes the Fusion Health and Oriental Botanicals brands, and follows the company's announcement that it intended to divest non-core brands from the portfolio, earlier this year.

"While we have decided that Global Therapeutics is no longer part of our strategic priorities, I want to acknowledge the unique value of these brands," Blackmores CEO, Alastair Symington said.

Global Therapeutics was acquired by Blackmores in May 2016.

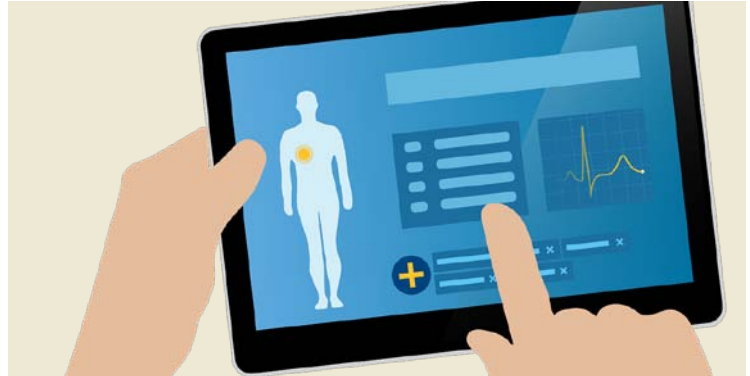
MHR proves its worth in 2020 crises

BETWEEN bushfires and the COVID-19 pandemic, the Australian Digital Health Agency (ADHA), has reported an increase in health practitioners using the My Health Record (MHR).

The ADHA's annual report revealed 99% of pharmacies were registered to upload data to patients' MHRs at 30 Jun - up from 88% in 2019 - while dispense records were up from 27 million to 82 million in the same period.

ADHA Independent Clinical Advisor, Dr Steve Hambleton, said health workers were increasingly seeing the benefits of digital health.

"I want hospitals and specialists to have rapid access to relevant information about my patients when they are caring for them, and as a GP, when a patient comes back to see me having been discharged from hospital or with a report from a specialist, I value what those hospitals and specialists share and upload to MHR for the ongoing care I



provide," he said.

The ADHA report found the number of documents uploaded by public hospitals and viewed by other healthcare providers had jumped by 300% in the year to Jun, a trend welcomed by the agency's CEO, Amanda Cattermole.

"Over the last 12 months it's been great to see the increases in clinically helpful data in the system and the sharing and viewing by health professionals," she said.

"MHR provides the repository

for consumers' health data and is a great way for them to safely and securely engage with their healthcare providers.

"I encourage people to log into their MHR and ensure their information including allergies, medicines, immunisations, and any pathology reports has been uploaded.

"It can make a significant difference to health outcomes and assist medical staff in diagnosis and treatment."

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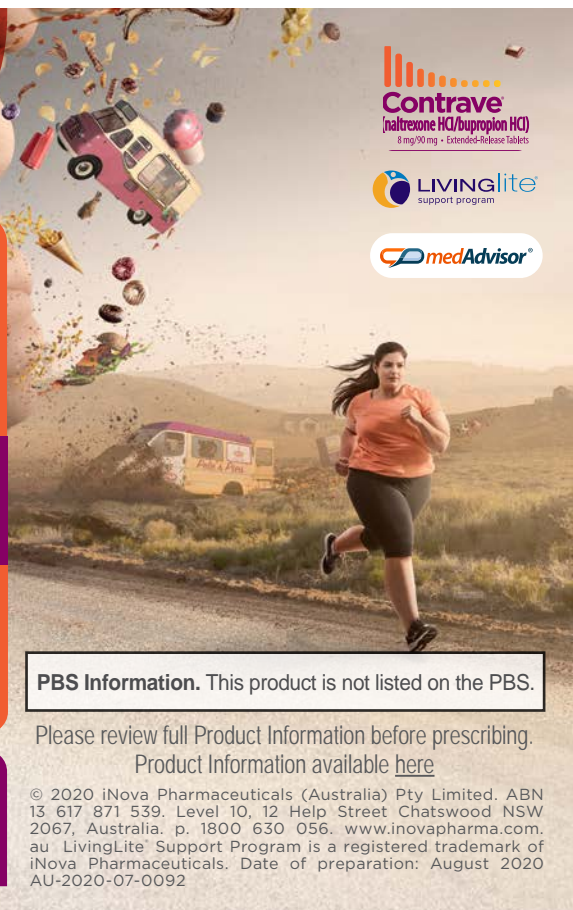
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PBS Information. This product is not listed on the PBS.

Please review full Product Information before prescribing. Product Information available [here](#)

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Dispensary Corner

SANTA Claus could have been the first recipient of a COVID-19 vaccine, under a now-ditched US Government plan to get the jolly red man completely coronavirus-safe.

Ric Erwin from the Fraternal Order of Real Bearded Santas has confirmed the proposal to the *Wall Street Journal*, with the US Department of Health and Human Services postulating that a vaccine would be approved by mid-Nov.

Michael Caputo, a formal assistant secretary at the department, apparently told Erwin that it would first be distributed to essential workers.

"If you and your colleagues are not essential workers, I don't know what is," he told Erwin in a phone call recording released by the newspaper.

It's understood that about 100 Santas and their helpers had already volunteered to take the vaccine as part of a US\$250 million campaign which aimed to boost take-up by gaining celebrity endorsements.

Health officials have now confirmed that the promotion had been dropped, which Erwin said was "extremely disappointing".

"This was our greatest hope for Christmas 2020, and now it looks like it won't happen".

He said that unfortunately with Santa being in a high risk category almost all in-person encounters were impossible, "not to mention the fact that our clientele, the children, are notorious vectors for all things infectious".

Symbion targets 2021

MEMBERS of Symbion's healthSAVE and Pharmacy Choice retail programs are set to get more support than ever in 2021, with the launch of the wholesaler's 5 Steps Retail Program.

The new member program incorporates merchandising, retailing, marketing, staff training and business support, with Symbion CEO, Brett Barons, saying it has been designed to support "all types of pharmacies", and help them to become "the trusted health destinations" in their local communities.

"Our member pharmacies are all distinctly different but equally focussed on becoming the trusted health destination in their local community and the program is designed to support their unique needs, whether they're independently branded Pharmacy Choice members or part of our healthSAVE banner network," he said.



"For our Pharmacy Choice members, this year we're focussed on supporting them as independent community health destinations, helping them to connect with their patients at a local level and providing integrated, multi-channel marketing support.

"Likewise, our healthSAVE members benefit from strong branding support and the leverage of our national presence to deliver stronger marketing campaigns and forge better relationships with their customers."

CWH makes European debut in Ireland

AUSTRALIAN discount giant, Chemist Warehouse (CWH), has expanded its global reach, opening its first European store in Ireland.

Announcing its move into the Irish market, CWH Director, Mario Tascone, said the store in the north-west Dublin suburb of Blanchardstown will deliver high-quality products at affordable prices.

"We are thrilled to open the doors to our first European store," he said.

"It is a landmark for the CWH Group and we couldn't be happier."

In a post on LinkedIn, Irish

pharmacist and digital marketing consultant, Colm Baker, urged pharmacy owners in the Emerald Isle to get on the front foot and proactively promote the value and benefits they offer, if they are to compete with CWH's pricing focus.

"The level of care, expertise and service that independents offer on our doorstep is incredible, but independents risk losing customers if they don't enhance their promotion of these benefits locally," he said.

In addition to the physical store, CWH is set to bring its online offering to the Irish market, with its website yet to be launched.



Guild Update

Champion pharmacy acknowledged

CAPITAL Chemist Chisholm in the ACT will this week be presented its Guild Pharmacy of the Year 2020 trophy by Canberra MP David Smith.

The Guild Pharmacy of the Year awards highlight and honour pharmacies that are leaders in adapting and innovating to provide the best healthcare for members of their communities.

The awards, sponsored by Care Pharmaceuticals, are traditionally presented during the Pharmacy Guild's annual conference on the Gold Coast which was disrupted this year because of COVID-19.

ACT Branch President of the Pharmacy Guild Simon Blacker said Capital Chemist Chisholm had stood out because it had its finger on the pulse of its community and as a result had sought to provide the services and offerings that the community needs.

"It listens to the community. It reacts to what the community needs and it does this while also ensuring its business management strategies are second to none because it recognises the need to constantly improve and evolve," Mr Blacker said.



New Products

- **Gemtuzumab ozogamicin (Mylotarg)** is an antibody-drug conjugate (ADC) composed of the CD33-directed monoclonal antibody (hP67.6; recombinant humanised IgG4k) that is covalently linked to the cytotoxic agent, N-acetyl gamma calicheamicin. The antibody portion (hP67.6) binds specifically to the CD33 antigen, a sialic acid-dependent adhesion protein found on the surface of myeloid leukaemic blasts and immature normal cells of myelomonocytic lineage, but not on normal haematopoietic stem cells. The anticancer activity of gemtuzumab ozogamicin may be due to the binding of the ADC to CD33-expressing tumour cells, followed by internalisation of the ADC-CD33 complex, and the intracellular release of N-acetyl gamma calicheamicin dimethyl hydrazide via hydrolytic cleavage of the linker. Activation of N-acetyl gamma calicheamicin dimethyl hydrazide induces double-stranded DNA breaks, subsequently inducing cell cycle arrest and apoptotic cell death. Mylotarg, in combination with standard anthracycline and cytarabine, is indicated for the treatment of patients ≥ 15 years with previously untreated, *de novo* CD33-positive acute myeloid leukaemia, except acute promyelocytic leukaemia. Mylotarg powder for injection contains gemtuzumab ozogamicin 5 mg per vial and is available in pack size of 1.
- **Midodrine hydrochloride (Vasodrine)** is the rapidly absorbed prodrug of desglymidodrine. Desglymidodrine is a sympathomimetic agent with a direct and selective effect on peripheral α_1 -adrenergic receptors. This α_1 -stimulative effect induces vasoconstriction of the venous system (causing a reduction in venous pooling) and increases the peripheral arterial resistance, resulting in an increase in arterial blood pressure. Nonclinical experiments showed that midodrine had a selective effect on blood flow in various vascular beds, with the most effect observed in the femoral artery, and least in the mesenteric artery. Vasodrine is indicated for the treatment of adults with severe symptomatic orthostatic hypotension due to autonomic dysfunction when exacerbating factors have been addressed and other forms of treatment remain inadequate. Vasodrine is contraindicated in patients with severe organic heart disease (e.g. bradycardia, heart attack, congestive heart failure, cardiac conduction disturbances or aortic aneurysm); hypertension; serious obliterative blood vessel disease; cerebrovascular occlusions and vessel spasms; acute kidney disease; severe renal impairment (ClCr < 30 mL/min); serious prostate disorder; urinary retention; proliferative diabetic retinopathy; phaeochromocytoma; hyperthyroidism or thyrotoxicosis; and narrow angle glaucoma. Vasodrine tablets contain midodrine hydrochloride 2.5 mg or 5 mg and are available in a pack size of 90.

New Contraindications

- **Colchicine (Colgout)** is now contraindicated in patients with renal or hepatic impairment who are taking a P-glycoprotein inhibitor or strong CYP3A4 inhibitor.
- **Dapoxetine (Priligy)** is now contraindicated in patients with a history of syncope, mania or severe depression.
- **Lercanidipine HCl (Zanidip)** is now contraindicated in patients with left ventricular outflow tract obstruction; untreated congestive cardiac failure; unstable angina pectoris or recent myocardial infarction (within 1 month); severe renal impairment (GFR < 30 mL/min) including patients undergoing dialysis; and coadministration with strong CYP3A4 inhibitors, grapefruit or grapefruit juice.
- **Linagliptin/metformin HCl (Trajentamet)** is now contraindicated in patients with severe renal failure (ClCr < 30 mL/min), which may also result from conditions such as cardiovascular collapse (shock), acute myocardial infarction, and septicemia.
- **Telmisartan/hydrochlorothiazide (Micardis Plus)** is now contraindicated in patients with coma hepaticum, hepatic precoma; acute glomerulonephritis; therapy-refractory hyponatraemia; hypovolaemia; and symptomatic hyperuricaemia or gout.
- **Terlipressin (acetate) (Glypressin)** is now contraindicated in patients with current or recent ischaemic cardiovascular disease.

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.

Revised opioids PBS listings from 1 October 2020

Commencing 1 October 2020, opioid listings on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) will be revised to ensure unimpeded access to opioid medication to palliative care patients, and to reduce additional administrative burden.

For more information, see <https://www.pbs.gov.au/info/news/2020/09/revised-opioids-pbs-listings-from-1-october-2020>.