

## Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features two pages of news, plus a full page from Nova Pharmaceuticals.

## Rural Aussies breathe easier

RURAL Australians may be disproportionately affected by chronic disease, but that might not be the case when it comes to asthma, research reveals.

Data from Southern Cross University has found people living in rural parts of South Australia had a lower rate of diagnosis of asthma than those residing in urban areas in and around Adelaide.

Although the news is positive for rural Australians, it may be too soon to breathe a sigh of relief, as health care access still remains a considerable problem for rural communities.

## Will 7CPA service funding satisfy?

QUESTIONS are being asked about whether the funding allocated for professional services in the Seventh Community Pharmacy Agreement (7CPA) will satisfy the profession.

Speaking at the official launch of the 2019 University of Technology Sydney (UTS) Community Pharmacy Barometer yesterday, former Head of the UTS Graduate School of Health, Emertius Professor, Charlie Benrimoj, suggested the agreement signed in Jun did not match the expectations of the profession.

"If you look at the 7CPA (PD 12 Jun), I think we all expected a whole range of new services, but we didn't see that," he said.

"What people were telling us [in the latest Barometer survey] is that they wanted a greater proportion of funds to be allocated to services in the 7CPA.

"That's not really happened.

"We're getting 75% of people saying they want more for services



yet we're not seeing more for services, although the story is because there was a \$100 million underspend that [the \$1.2 billion funding allocation for services in the 7CPA] is more money for services, but in reality it's not."

Benrimoj noted that while pharmacists wanted to see more funding for professional services, when the latest Barometer reading was taken in Nov 2019 (PD 20

Aug), there had been a decline in the proportion of pharmacies employing dedicated to the provision of services.

However, pharmacy owner and UTS Community Pharmacy Barometer Expert Panel member, John Bell, said this did not reflect a decline in service provision, but was a sign that pharmacists were taking on a number of different roles within their stores.

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## Dispensary Corner

**ONCE** on the verge of extinction due to the near total deforestation of its natural habitat, British dermatologists believe reports of the demise of *pithris pubis* may be premature.

It appears that changing attitudes towards hair removal, climate change and the growing resistance to chemical treatments such as permethrin are contributing to the revival of the pubic louse.

British Association of Dermatologists spokesman, Matthew Gass, suggested the revival may not be all bad.

"There has been much speculation in the last two decades about pubic lice going the way of the dodo," he said.

"Frankly, I suspect that they would be missed rather less.

"That said, for all the talk of deforestation of their natural habitat, they have clung on.

"Although we are unlikely to ever truly eradicate this pest, it's arguable that the 'cure' is worse than the disease for most people.

"Issues stemming from waxing, and other methods of widespread pubic hair removal, such as ingrown hairs or skin irritation are more common than pubic lice are ever likely to be."

## Pharmacist vax not about turf war

**PHARMACIST** vaccination services are not about "eating another health profession's lunch" but boosting access to immunisations, former International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) Community Pharmacy Section President, Paul Sinclair, believes.

Speaking during an FIP webinar last night, the former Pharmacy Guild of Australia National Vice President, stressed the need for pharmacists to be better utilised in the delivery of immunisation services.

"Preventable diseases such as influenza continue to kill too many people each year," he said.

"To improve vaccine access

and uptake, health systems must fully leverage the potential of pharmacists in their vaccination strategies.

"It's important from FIP's point-of-view [that] improving vaccination coverage is a healthcare imperative that requires responses from all health systems including diversified vaccination gateways.

"It's not about taking some other profession's lunch - it's about improving vaccination rates by leveraging the most accessible primary healthcare professionals within most communities."

Sinclair said that national pharmacy groups seeking to advocate for pharmacists to have a greater role in the delivery of



immunisations should ensure they have answers ready to respond to every question and concern about pharmacists moving into the vaccination space.

He also advocated engaging with political figures who can support the expansion of pharmacists' scope into this area.

## E-scripts now running in all jurisdictions

**AUSTRALIAN** Digital Health Agency (ADHA) Communities of Interest are now dispensing electronic prescriptions in all States and Territories, with Alice Springs Pharmacy processing the Northern Territory's first on Tue.

Welcoming the continued rollout of e-scripts, Alice Springs Pharmacy Manager, Anandh Vijayan, said the move would make it easier for patients to access medications.

"Alice Springs has a large number of tourists and visitors

from other parts of the country who will now be able to access medications from their GP while they are visiting," he said.

"It will also save our pharmacy considerable time that we would otherwise spend dealing with fax copies and having to chase up originals."

The token e-script was issued using Best Practice medical prescribing software, the eRx Script Exchange and Fred IT Group's Fred Dispense and MedView Flow.

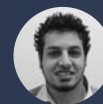
## Telehealth plea

**GENERAL** practitioners are calling on the Federal Government to deliver clarity on the future of telehealth services ahead of the scheduled end of Medicare-subsidies on 30 Sep.

Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) Queensland Chair, Dr Bruce Willett, said the service need to be extended while stakeholders develop a "suitable long-term solution" to ensuring patients retain access to medical care.

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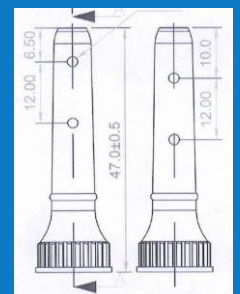
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