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PPA Eol responses a step forward

PHARMACIES that submitted expression of interest (Eol) applications to take part in the national COVID-19 vaccination rollout, should hear from the Pharmacy Programs Administrator (PPA) by close of business today.

A spokesperson for the Pharmacy Guild of Australia told **Pharmacy Daily** that the PPA was likely to request additional information from stores to support their Eol submissions.

However, Capital Chemist Group Business Manager, Andrew Topp, reported that at least two of the group's stores had been informed that the information submitted in their Eols was adequate and no further action was required.

Topp said a third Capital Chemist pharmacy had been asked to recommit to the number of vaccines it can administer.

Pharmacies had initially been expecting to receive Eol approval notices on 19 Mar, however the PPA said it would seek to clarify



information provided during the Eol process, with final assessment activities to be completed in May.

Meanwhile, the Commonwealth Department of Health has announced that "significant updates have occurred to the COVID-19 vaccination training program", following changes to the Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) recommendations for the AstraZeneca vaccine.

Pharmacists who have

undertaken the training are expected to login and view the new information.

"A summary of the updates can be found in the announcement forum," the Department said.

"All changes within the modules are identified by 'NEW' in red."

Today's issue of *PD*

Pharmacy Daily today features three pages of news, plus a full page from *Willach*.

2021 Flu vax info

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has accepted the recommendations of the Australian Influenza Vaccine Committee regarding the vaccines to be used in Australia.

This year there is a new A (H1N1)-like virus strain and a new A (H3N2)-like virus strain being used in the vaccines.

CLICK HERE for more.

Second TTS case linked to AZ COVAX

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has confirmed a second case of thrombosis with thrombocytopenia syndrome (TTS) in a patient who received the AstraZeneca (AZ) COVID-19 vaccine (COVAX).

The TGA's Vaccine Safety Investigation Group (VSIG) revealed the case was "likely to be linked to vaccination", with

the patient - a woman in her 40s who received the shot in Western Australia - currently in a stable condition in hospital.

"There have been about 700,000 doses of AZ COVAX administered in Australia to date, so while numbers are small, two cases of the TTS equates to a frequency of one in 350,000," the TGA said.

CLICK HERE for more.

Jab fear no more

ECOMED is aiming to combat patients' fear of needles by bringing Bionix Medical Technologies' ShotBlocker device to Australia for the first time this year.

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New Webinar

15 Tips for a healthy mouth

In a GuildEd first, Guild Learning and Development and TePe Australia have partnered to present a webinar on oral health developed specifically for pharmacy assistants

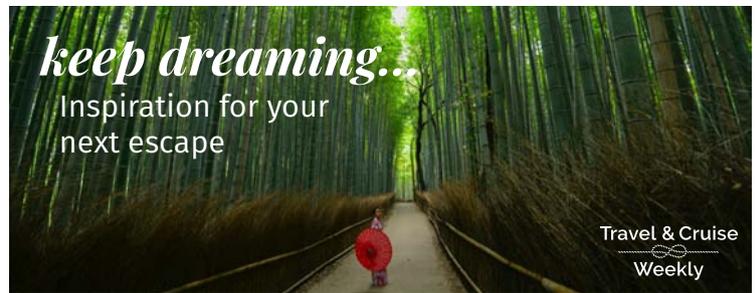
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Dentists have role to play in AMR fight

SIGNIFICANT opportunities exist for dentists around the world to contribute to efforts to tackle antimicrobial resistance (AMR) by changing their antibiotic prescribing, researchers believe.

A study of patterns of dental antibiotic prescribing in 2017, in Australia, England, the US and British Columbia (Canada), published in *Infection Control and Hospital Epidemiology*, found “dental antibiotic stewardship programs are urgently needed worldwide”.

“Antibiotic resistance is a major public health burden driven by the unnecessary use of antibiotics,” the authors said.

“Dentists contribute significantly to global antibiotic use and are responsible for an estimated 10% of all antibiotics prescribed to humans.

“High rates of dental overprescribing in relation to

national guidelines have been identified in Australia, England, and the US.

“In 2017, wide variation existed in the patterns of antibiotic prescribing by dentists.

“The rate per 1,000 population in the US was twice that in Australia, which had the lowest prescribing rate.

“Although amoxicillin was the most prescribed dental antibiotic in all four countries, clindamycin was the second most prescribed dental antibiotic in the US and British Columbia compared to metronidazole in Australia and England.”

The authors noted “concerning differences exist in patterns of dental antibiotic prescribing around the world”, and recommended that there should be a shift in focus from broad-spectrum medications to narrower-spectrum antibiotics such as phenoxymethylpenicillin.



“The dental profession can also contribute to improvements in patient safety by minimizing the use of antibiotics associated with increased adverse drug reactions by reviewing guidelines, auditing compliance, and assisting in efforts to delabel people who identify as penicillin allergic,” they said.

Kindness, empathy key for education

PHARMACY and other healthcare educators are being urged to exercise kindness, empathy and self-compassion, as students and teachers continue to deal with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, researchers believe.

In a paper released in *BMJ Global Health*, 20 professors from seven high-income countries, including Australia, outlined their experiences of teaching during the pandemic.

“Pandemic fatigue has made

us all more stressed and less productive,” they said.

“As the pandemic threatens to stretch through 2021, teachers and students have a tough year ahead.

“We believe kindness, empathy and self-compassion are critical for students’ and professors’ wellness during these difficult times and to ensure we fully support the development of all students in the pipeline for the global health practice, policy and research.”

No J&J jab for Oz

THE Federal Government will not purchase doses of Johnson and Johnson’s (J&J’s) COVID-19 vaccine due to its use of similar technology to the AstraZeneca (AZ) shot, a spokesperson for Minister for Health, Greg Hunt says.

“The vaccine is an adenovirus vaccine, the same type of vaccine as the AZ vaccine,” the spokesperson said.

“The Government does not intend to purchase any further adenovirus vaccines.”

Guild Update

World Immunisation Week

WORLD Immunisation Week – celebrated every year in the last week of April – aims to promote the use of vaccines to protect people of all ages against disease.

The importance of being vaccinated has been highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and with Australia entering the flu season the need to be vaccinated against COVID-19 and the flu is a focus.

Immunisation saves millions of lives every year and is widely recognised as one of the world’s most successful health interventions.

However, there are still nearly 20 million children in the world today who are not getting the vaccines they need, and many miss out on vital vaccines during adolescence, adulthood and into old age.

World Immunisation Week 2021 will urge greater engagement around immunisation globally to promote the importance of vaccination in bringing people together, and improving the health and wellbeing of everyone, everywhere throughout life.

More details are available on the [World Immunisation Week](https://www.worldimmunisationweek.org/) website.

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Dispensary Corner

KOREAN cosmetics giant Innisfree has red-facedly apologised over some of its eco-friendly packaging claims.

A customer on a "No Plastic Shopping" Facebook group posted about her disappointment at finding a container loudly proclaiming "Hello, I'm Paper Bottle" (pictured) was actually just a plastic bottle wrapped in paper.



The company quickly acknowledged that the label may have been misleading. "We overlooked the possibility that the naming could mislead people to think the whole packaging is made of paper," Innisfree said in a statement. However the company also noted the plastic bottle was recyclable and used 51% less plastic than conventional packaging.

Fake Qld copper foiled

QUEENSLAND Police have busted a Sunshine Coast pharmacy bandit who posed as a cop and threatened to arrest staff at Maroochy Waters Pharmacy, if they did not hand over controlled medicines.

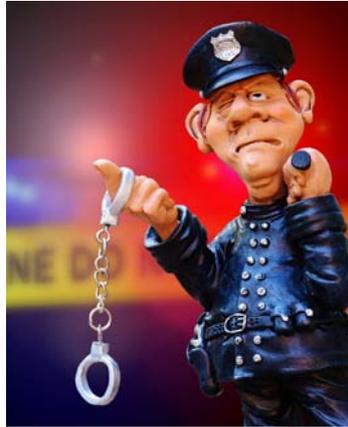
Detective Senior Sergeant, Daren Edwards, praised the actions of the pharmacy's employees, who realised something was not right as "it's not normal for police to come and make those types of requests".

"One was able to contact police, and I believe they also took some vision themselves of the offender leaving, so they did a really good job," he said.

Edwards noted that the 36-year-old suspect appeared to have purchased imitation police badges, body armour and a replica gun, online, *ABC News* reported.

"Obviously some planning had gone into it and it appears that some of those products were able to be sourced over the internet," he said.

The fake copper was intercepted by police shortly after leaving the pharmacy and has been charged with at least five offences,



including carrying an exposed weapon in public, impersonating a public officer and stealing.

Police seized a magazine from the replica gun and a knife during the arrest.

The woman is also alleged to have been carrying handcuffs and an extendable baton at the time of her arrest.

Edwards called on all retail workers to remain calm when interacting with would-be robbers to limit the risk of violence.

"You can replace items," he said. "You can't replace people's bodies."

'Get jiggly' with new Glucojel Bears

PHARMACY Guild of Australia subsidiary, Gold Cross, is expanding its confectionery range with the launch of Glucojel Bears.

As part of the rollout of the new gummy bears Gold Cross is offering a 5% discount on orders of three or more cartons.

In a video posted on Vimeo, the company is promising the bears will deliver "big taste" and "big flavour", while urging people



to "get jiggly with bigger better bears".

CLICK HERE to see the video.

C-19 spray trial

MELBOURNE-BASED ENT Technologies says it is "eagerly awaiting results from additional clinical trials," based on laboratory findings that its carrageenan-saline nasal spray product may demonstrate preventative action against the COVID-19 virus.

The company's product is currently registered for use and available in most retail pharmacies across Australia as a protective moisture barrier for hydrating and soothing nasal mucosa.

Derived from red seaweed, carrageenan has been shown to block the action of two of the most common cold-causing viruses, with the large molecule binding to nasal tissue to help trap prospective infections before entering tissue cells.

A peer-reviewed study funded by Marinomed Biotech AG published in Feb in the *PLoS One* journal found that iota-carrageenan "can inhibit the cell entry of the SARS-CoV-2 spike pseudotyped lentivirus" - see journals.plos.org.

RPS President to step aside

SANDRA Gidley, the first woman to become President of the UK's Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS), has announced she will not seek re-election when her current term expires in Jun this year.

Gidley said she believes RPS board members should only serve for a limited period, with her departure underlining her commitment to this principle.



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