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## APP2021 to be 'best in decades'

**AUSTRALIAN** Pharmacy Professional Conference (APP2021) Convenor, Kos Sclavos, believes this year's event is "shaping up to be the best we've had in decades".

Sclavos confirmed that the conference's trade show has been sold out with 400 exhibitors "locked in and ready to go".

The 2021 event's speaker line-up includes Federal Health Minister, Greg Hunt, Shadow Health Minister, Mark Butler, and Queensland's Chief Health Officer, Dr Jeannette Young.

See **page four** for more details about APP2021.

## Don't miss mental health opportunity

**FEDERAL** politicians should not overlook the role community pharmacists play in supporting patients with mental health conditions.

Pharmacy Guild of Australia National President, Trent Twomey, told **Pharmacy Daily** that the 55-page House of Representatives Select Committee on Mental Health and Suicide Prevention interim report, which made no reference to the profession, was a missed opportunity to recognise the work pharmacists do to support patients in the community.

"The accessibility and consistency of personnel and service, of community pharmacies, are key factors in helping mental health patients," he said.

"Pharmacists also are often the first health professional mental health patients may consult and are key to ensuring medication regimens are adhered to."

Twomey noted that the *Bridging the Gap between Physical and Mental Illness in Community Pharmacy Randomised Control Trial* collaboration between the Guild, PSA, Griffith University and the University of Sydney, estimates that thousands of patients a year die prematurely.

"However, this mortality rate is generally due to health conditions experienced by the general population, such as cardiovascular and respiratory diseases," he said.

"Urgent attention is therefore

required to address associated physical health concerns of this vulnerable population.

"Medications are a common treatment option for managing mental and physical illnesses, which are mostly obtained from community pharmacies.

"Pharmacists are well-positioned to improve mental health and associated physical healthcare, resolve any associated medication-related problems including medication adherence, and signpost consumers to other services."

## Finding solutions

**EMBRACING** dispensing robots can help optimise workflows, allowing pharmacists to spend more time with patients, while securing greater cost savings.

See **page three** to learn more about Willach Pharmacy Solutions' Consis robot.

## Today's issue of PD

**Pharmacy Daily** today features two pages of news, plus full pages from:

- Willach
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## Dispensary Corner

**STUDENTS** from the University of Minnesota are set to mix Greek tragedies with pharmacy as part of a new Performance and Social Change course.

The program, which is being led by academics from the university's College of Pharmacy and Theatre Studies faculties, aims to explore how pharmaceutical substances have been used to enhance or damage the idea of a healthy body and how to convey the ideas theatrically, *The Minnesota Daily* reports.

Theatre Studies Professor, Dr Sonja Kufninec, said the class was based on the Greek word "pharmakon", which translates into English as, remedy, poison and scapegoat.

"There is this really interesting connection between pharmacy and theatre through the terminology and ideas of the pharmakon," she said.

"What we are interested in is exploring that duality of anything that is extractive as both being potentially healing and potentially poisoning."

## 'Unethical' pharmacist gets \$38k fine

A **SUSPENDED** pharmacist who falsely claimed to be registered with the Pharmacy Board of Australia to work as a locum at a pharmacy in Penrith has been fined \$38,000 by the Local Court of NSW.

Albert Young pleaded guilty to 19 charges of "holding himself out as a pharmacist" in breach of the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, at a hearing earlier this week.

Young's registration had been suspended by the Pharmacy Council of NSW in May 2019 after it received evidence that he had fraudulently ordered medications through the National Diabetes Subsidy Scheme (NDSS), which were shipped to overseas patients (*PD* 30 Nov 2020).

However, he continued to act as a pharmacist while unregistered, until the Pharmacy Council of NSW notified the owner of the pharmacy where he worked, that he had been suspended.

Magistrate Vivien Swain imposed a fine of \$2,000 for each of the 19 charges against Young, and ordered him to pay the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency's (AHPRA's) legal costs of \$2,500 and the court's costs of \$3,230.

Swain described Young's conduct as, "unethical, dishonest and Young

knew it... pharmacists are held in high regard by the community and are expected to be honest".

"[Young] is to be held accountable for his actions," she added.

Pharmacy Board of Australia Chair, Brett Simmonds, welcomed the verdict.

"Falsely claiming to be registered erodes public trust in health practitioners," he said.

"This outcome is welcome, and we hope it sends a strong message of deterrence to others."

AHPRA CEO, Martin Fletcher,



added that the organisation would not hesitate to prosecute "any individual who continues to practice when their registration is suspended".

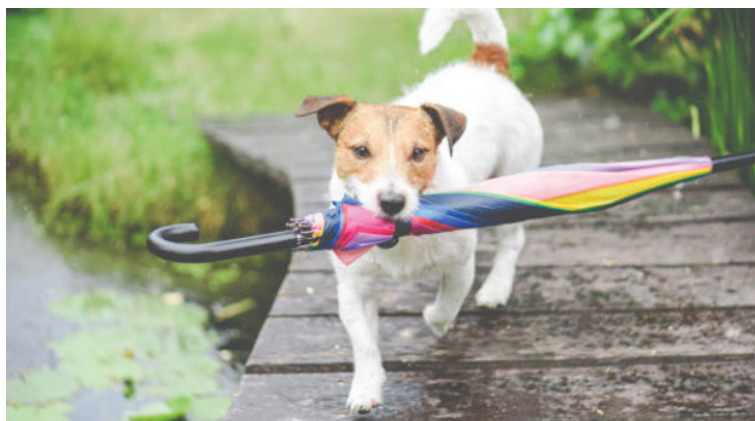
## SHPA backs Guilds rural COVAX push

**THE** Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia (SHPA) believes the Federal Government should "harness the responsiveness of pharmacists to the needs of the populations they serve" by accelerating the rollout of COVID-19 vaccines (COVAX) through rural pharmacies.

SHPA CEO, Kristin Michaels, welcomed the Government's recalibrated COVAX strategy, announced after yesterday's National Cabinet meeting, which will see Australians aged 50 years and older being offered the

Astra Zeneca vaccine at state-run vaccine clinics from 03 May.

"We reiterate our support for the Government's view that GP clinics remain the most vital COVID-19 vaccine access point for the wider Australian community, and support this week's proposal by the Pharmacy Guild of Australia to bring forward the ability for community pharmacies in non-metropolitan areas with limited or no GP access to become vaccine hubs for these communities," she said.



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