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No reason to deny pharmacy NIP: PSA

STATE and Territory Governments are against being urged to follow Victoria's lead in making National Immunisation Program (NIP) vaccines available through pharmacies.

Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) National President, Associate Professor Chris Freeman, said "there is no reasonable argument to deny patients who want to access NIP-listed vaccinations at their pharmacy that they are entitled to and need".

"Pharmacists are the most accessible healthcare providers, yet in some states and territories, they cannot provide their patients with NIP-funded vaccines which are recommended for them," he said.

"This is an incredibly frustrating experience for both patients and pharmacists.

"PSA has long advocated for national uniformity in allowing authorised pharmacist immunisers

to access NIP-funded vaccines.

"At present, NIP-funded influenza vaccines can be administered by authorised pharmacists in the ACT, Victoria and Western Australia under certain conditions, with NSW the latest jurisdiction to approve this from the 2022 influenza season and it has the backing of both political parties in Tasmania.

"Pharmacists have become a normal part of the vaccination workforce.

"It is time to align the funding and regulation of pharmacist-

administered vaccination with that of all other authorised immunisers."

Freeman also backed Pharmacy Guild of Australia WA Branch President, Andrew Ngeow's criticism of *Channel Seven's* (PD 29 Apr) reporting that pharmacies that have been administering "weaker" influenza vaccines.

"At a time when we are dealing with significant issues about vaccine hesitancy, political point scoring and clickbait will only undermine our public health initiatives," he said.

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

- Max Biocare
- TerryWhite Chemmart

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Act now on aged care meds safety

FEDERAL Treasurer, Josh Frydenberg, is being urged to allocate funding for greater pharmacist-led medicines safety measures for aged care, in next month's Budget.

Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) National President, Associate Professor Chris Freeman, warned that failure to invest in pharmacists would see continued medicines mismanagement in the sector, highlighted by the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety.

Freeman noted the PSA's *Medicine Safety: Take Care and Medicine Safety: Aged Care* reports found more than 95% of patients living in residential aged care facilities had at least one medicine-related problem at the time of a medication review, with most having three, while 6% had been administered a potentially hazardous medication combination. "The Morrison Government has already recognised medicine safety



as a National Health Priority Area," he said.

"Now they must act to address medicine safety in residential aged care facilities, in response to the Aged Care Royal Commission.

"Residents in aged care facilities deserve to have timely and regular access to the expertise of a pharmacist if they require advice and support with their medicines and medicine management.

"Embedding pharmacists in aged care facilities will improve aged care medication management, ultimately reducing medicine-related harm amongst residents."

Freeman said pharmacists' expertise in medicines management meant they were ideally placed to identify and resolve issues, by conducting reviews, and educating and supporting aged care workers.

TWC SA PotY

TERRYWHITE Chemmart (TWC) Christies Guild has taken home the network's South Australian Pharmacy of the Year (PotY) title at its Lead Beyond conference in Adelaide yesterday.

The Christies Guild store will compete with other state winners for the TWC National PotY Award, which will be announced on 18 May.

See **page five** for more.

Discover Biocare

PHARMACISTS looking to learn more about Max Biocare's evidence-based health, nutrition and beauty supplements can do so at the Australian Pharmacy Professional Conference (APP) next month.

APP delegates can earn CPD points at the Max Biocare seminar during the event.

See **page four** for more.

Guild names final four for lotY title

ACT-BASED intern pharmacists dominate the final four candidates running for the 2020 MIMS/Pharmacy Guild of Australia Intern of the Year (lotY) Award.

Western Australia-based pharmacy intern, Yasmin Hussenbocus, will have to see off the challenges of Canberra's Angus Koerstz, Kenny Vuong and Lauren Butler, if she is to

prevent a second successive lotY title going to the nation's capital territory, after Lucinda Kenny claimed the 2019 crown last year (**PD** 19 May 2020).

The winner will be named by Guild National President, Trent Twomey, at the opening plenary session at the Australian Pharmacy Professional Conference on the Gold Coast on 20 May.



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Dispensary Corner

WHILE COVID-19 has put a dampener on some couple's sex lives (*PD* 29 Apr), an 85-year-old Italian appears to be struggling to control an overactive libido after being vaccinated last week.

The octogenarian was busted for breaching COVID curfews twice in a matter of hours last week, when he was caught visiting sex workers near the Southern Italian town of Eboli.

A police spokesperson noted the elderly gent was initially spotted entering a campervan that was parked close to a beach that has a history of being used by sex workers.

"He was told he was in breach of COVID curfew regulations and fined €500 and released but he was then stopped less than an hour later further along the road at another campervan used by sex workers and fined a further €500," the spokesperson said.

Despite racking up €1,000 in fines the geriatric lothario told police it was money well spent, claiming his recent COVID vaccine had provoked his desires in an unexpected way.

With vaccine hesitancy a concern for public health officials, this side effect could get some patients a little bit excited about getting their shot.

Offer second COVAX shot: US govt

PHARMACISTS in the US are being urged to offer patients a second dose of COVID-19 vaccines (COVAX) even if they received their initial shot from a different provider.

The move announced by the US Federal Government earlier this week aims to counter the growing number of people who have had the first dose of either the Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna vaccines, but have been unable to get their second jab due to challenges accessing their GP, the *New York Times* reported.

Data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has estimated that more than five million people in the US have been unable to get fully vaccinated.

In a statement from the White House on Tue, Centers for Medicare

and Medicaid Services Acting Administrator, Andy Slavitt, said the move was designed to ensure university students who may have received an initial dose of a COVAX on campus can get their second in a different location if necessary.

"College students lead lives that make physical isolation somehow a little more challenging.

"I say this with the knowledge of having one — a college student, that is — as well as a recent graduate, now in his 20s," he said.

"And a vaccine seems like the best way not to battle their impulse to socialise.

"So, we are very supportive of states in their effort to improve access and make it even easier for their students to get their shots.

"To do our part, we shared with governors that we will be ensuring



that pharmacies in the federal pharmacy program do not have residency requirements in place, so that students who do return home can get their second dose in that home state.

"Now, in fact, most pharmacies administering shots will now offer anyone a second dose regardless of where they got their first.

"This seems like a good opportunity to remind you to get your second shot if it's your time and if you haven't."

Shortage update

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has updated its database of section 19a approvals to import and supply medicines to address medicines shortages.

The latest update has seen the addition of Ranbaxy UK's sertraline 50mg and 100mg film-coated tablets, with import and supply approved until 30 Jun.

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Pictured above: The TWC Christies Guild team pictured with their award last night at the Gala Awards event of the South Australia 'Lead Beyond' Conference.



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