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## Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features two pages of news, plus a full page from Sigma Healthcare.

## FindaPharmacy traffic soaring

PHARMACY owners participating in the COVID-19 vaccination campaign need to ensure their details are uploaded to the Pharmacy Guild of Australia's

[FindaPharmacy.com.au](http://FindaPharmacy.com.au) page.

Guild National President, Trent Twomey, noted that the site had 1.2 million visits in the last fortnight, up 600% on the previous two-week period.

Twomey told a webinar last night that the site's COVID-19 functionality was available to all pharmacies including non-members, with the rollout "bigger than politics".

# Pharmacy must deliver on COVAX

AUSTRALIA'S community pharmacy network is under the microscope, with National COVID-19 Vaccination (COVAX) Taskforce Co-ordinator, Lieutenant General John Frewin, urging the sector to deliver on its potential.

Speaking during the Pharmacy Guild of Australia's COVAX update webinar last night, Frewin said he had confidence in the sector, but warned pharmacies need to meet expectations.

"I'm a believer in the network, and I know there is enormous capacity," he said.

"But there are others looking very carefully at the numbers to say whether the numbers are showing the potential.

"So I implore you to make the most out of the AstraZeneca [vaccine] while we've got a chance to keep it moving."

Frewin told the webinar that as of yesterday there were approximately 670 pharmacies across the country administering the vaccine, with the

Taskforce expecting to have 1,500 stores providing AstraZeneca shots early next week, with close to 2,500 to be on board by 22 Aug.

"[It's] a massive effort to come on really quickly [and it's] really important to the rollout," he said.

"We've been working really well with you guys, it's been a great team effort, and it's been great to see you step up to the plate."

Responding to the General's comments, Guild National President, Trent Twomey said the profession understood its role.

"We hear you loud and clear," he said.

"You've opened the door for us, but now we've got to deliver for you."

The General added that with the Modern mRNA vaccine expected to arrive in mid-Sep, "pending approvals", the Taskforce had conducted a review of how it would be distributed.

"I'm still firmly of the view that we should keep the logistics simple



and the Moderna should go into the pharmacy network," he said. "So as soon as we've got the Moderna it will go to you."

"I don't see any benefit in mixing Moderna into the general practice network.

"Right now I think that having the choice across that really broad network is the best thing, and we will continue to try to bring on up to 1,000 pharmacies a week."

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## Dispensary Corner

**GERMAN** authorities are investigating the actions of a rogue nurse who is believed to have switched doses of COVID-19 vaccines with saline solution.

Up to 8,600 people who received jabs at the Roffhausen immunisation centre in Friesland, in the country's northwest, between 05 Mar and 20 Apr, are being urged to get an additional shot, as a result of the nurse's alleged actions.

"This is the only way to ensure complete vaccination protection," Lower Saxony State Health Office President, Matthias Pulz said.

"Even if people have already been correctly vaccinated twice."

The motivation behind the unnamed nurse's actions remain unknown, with Lower Saxony COVID-19 team Deputy Head, Claudia Schroder, saying the woman had remained silent during interviews with the police, but "investigations have shown the person was motivated to oppose the vaccination".

"We do not know whether and to what extent she was manipulated during this period," Schroder said.

"We do not know how many people were specifically affected and we are talking here about a period of seven weeks."



## DoH retains e-script fee

**MOVES** to cut the Electronic Prescription Fee (EPF) from 15 cents are on hold, with the Commonwealth Department of Health (DoH) agreeing to retain the current rates until 30 Jun 2022.

The decision to retain the EPF at 15 cents per script, will ensure the dispensing of e-scripts remains cost-neutral for community pharmacies, with the fee covering costs related to prescription exchange service providers.

Pharmacy Guild of Australia National Vice President and Chair of Health Economics and Policy, Anthony Tassone, welcomed the DoH's decision not to cut the funding.

"The Guild welcomes the confirmation by the DoH of the retention of the EPF at 15 cents and the subsidy for SMS messages related to e-script tokens for prescribers and pharmacies," he said.

"Certainty is vital in the uncertain times in which we currently find ourselves – particularly in relation to the significant change management that has been required to adopt and implement e-prescriptions by pharmacies.

"It is vital that there are no



additional charges for prescribers and pharmacies for the use of this infrastructure that is becoming increasingly important as part of everyday clinical practise.

"As agreed to in the Seventh Community Pharmacy Agreement, the DoH is undertaking a review of the e-script system with a view to having direct arrangements between the Commonwealth and prescription exchange service providers in the future.

"The Guild has been a key stakeholder during this process, and we look forward to further consultation and collaboration with the DoH."

## Minfos rolls out ASL workflow

**PHARMACY** software provider, Minfos, is introducing a new feature to enable pharmacists to efficiently dispense from a patient's Active Script List (ASL).

The function will enable pharmacists to view the patient's ASL and dispense single or multiple prescriptions, once the patient has been registered and given consent - either on a temporary or ongoing basis.

Symbion General Manager for Pharmacy Technology, Andrew Hall, said the system would make it easier for pharmacists to adapt their dispensary workflow to incorporate electronic scripts.

"We expect that, over time, more and more patients will adopt ASL and it's important that pharmacists using Minfos can seamlessly dispense scripts, no matter which prescribing method a patient prefers," he said.

Hall added that the function would help pharmacists to make better clinical decisions.

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## Knitting success

**GUARDIAN** Pharmacy's Guardian Angel Knitting for Good program has delivered more than 40 totes full of knitted garments for the St Vincent de Paul Society.

The total marks one of the largest donations of knitted clothing made in the program's 23-year history, with the items being donated to Australians experiencing homelessness.



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