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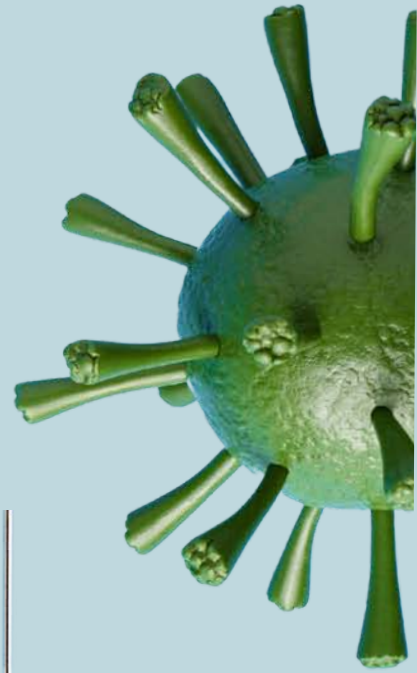
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COVID, bushfire 'double whammy'

WESTERN Australian pharmacies are facing a "double whammy" of crises as bushfires and fresh COVID-19 restrictions spark panic-buying.

Pharmacy Guild of Australia WA Branch President, Andrew Ngeow, told *Pharmacy Daily* that pharmacies across the state saw patient numbers in-store surge as Premier, Mark McGowan, announced a five-day lockdown of the Perth Metropolitan, Peel and South West regions, following the detection of a COVID-19 case linked to a hotel quarantine worker.

Ngeow said pharmacies in Perth saw a rush for face masks "as the Premier was making the announcement", noting the State was being hit with a "double whammy of bushfires and COVID".

With more than 70 homes destroyed by the fires, Ngeow praised the efforts of pharmacy workers in the face of the twin

crises, noting that some lived in fire-affected areas.

Meanwhile, Wizard Pharmacy Professional Services Manager, Jeanette Drury, told *Pharmacy Daily* that the group's stores were taking steps to tackle panic buying.

"With the WA Government's announcement on Sun, we saw increased panic buying, especially of masks," she said.

"Our pharmacies have all been very focused on maintaining stock levels to satisfy demand as best as possible, impacting our suppliers and wholesalers.

"We have implemented quantity restrictions on some essentials to ensure safe and fair distribution for all over this period, which we hope puts our customers at ease during this difficult time."

Drury said Wizard Pharmacy teams had moved "quickly and effectively" to implement the mandatory mask rulings, while



continuing to meet the medication and health-related needs of their local communities.

Drury noted that the bushfires were fueling concerns about air quality, but suggested the "lockdown mandate keeping people in their homes should actually help people with respiratory conditions as they will be less exposed to air pollution".

Today's issue of *PD*

Pharmacy Daily today features four pages of news, plus a front cover page from **VaccineConnect**.

COVAX booking

WITH COVID-19 vaccinations (COVAX) set to roll out in the coming weeks, having an efficient and effective booking system in place will be crucial to delivering successful services.

1st Group's VaccineConnect offers a solution that has certified integrations with the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR), Medicare and more than 50 widely used practice management systems.

To find out how VaccineConnect can help your pharmacy manage, monitor and administer vaccinations see today's **front page**.

CHF calls for mental health funding

THE Consumers' Health Forum (CHF) is calling on the Federal Government to increase funding for mental health and suicide prevention services in line with the Productivity Commission's Inquiry into Mental Health recommendations.

In its pre-Budget Submission, the CHF has said priority funding should be provided to implement digital mental health services; make permanent the changes to the Medicare Benefits

Schedule (MBS) to expand access to psychological therapy and psychiatric treatment by telehealth; ensure that care coordination programs are available to meet local needs; provide seed funding to create a professional association for peer workers and develop a program to educate health professionals about the role and value of peer workers in improving outcomes; and addressing gaps in homelessness services.

APC's Colloquium online and in person

THE Australian Pharmacy Council's (APC) Colloquium is set to go ahead on 06 May in Canberra, with delegates having the option to log-in online or attend the event in person.

Registration will open on 15 Feb, with a flat rate of \$150 for general registration, and \$50 for student and interns.

"There will be no price difference between face-to-face and online registration," organisers said.

"We've carefully considered this decision.

"There are comparable costs to hosting both face-to-face and online components.

"We are confident you will have a quality experience no matter the delivery mode."

Delegates will be eligible to receive a discounted rate to stay at the QT Hotel, with a discount code to be made available upon confirmation of registration.

CLICK HERE for more.

Trouble focusing and feeling stressed?

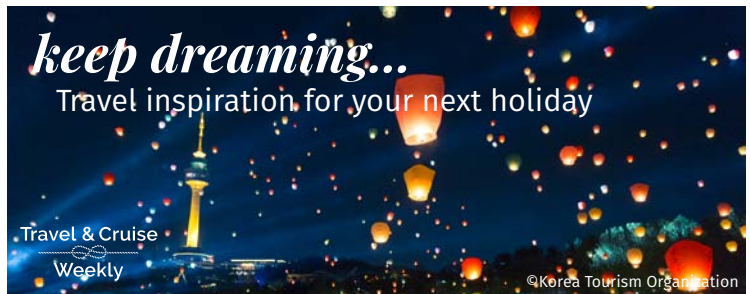
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Stough C et al. Psychopharmacology. 2001;156(4):481-484. Stough C et al. Phytother Res. 2008;22(12):1629-1634. Benson S et al. Phytother Res. 2014;28(4):551-9. Downey L et al. Phytother Res. 2013;27(9):1407-13



Time for face-to-face rehab

HOSPITALS are being urged to prioritise the resumption of face-to-face rehabilitation programs for heart attack survivors.

The call was made after a Heart Foundation survey revealed that just 14% of patients recovering from a heart attack who were undergoing rehabilitation using telehealth services completed their program, while 73% of those who had attended in-person services in the past six months had finished their scheduled rehab.

Heart Foundation General Manager of Heart Health, Bill Staveski, said that while telehealth services had been beneficial during the COVID crisis, as restrictions ease face-to-face rehabilitation should be the standard form of care for patients.

Bipartisan support for substitution

LEGISLATION aimed at boosting pharmacists' abilities to substitute prescribed medications is gaining support from both sides of politics.

Australian Labor Party Deputy Manager of Opposition Business, Mark Butler, voiced support for the Therapeutic Goods Amendment (2020 Measures No 2) Bill 2020, during yesterday's sitting at the House of Representatives.

"Members of this House will have heard story after story, for some years before COVID, of medicine shortages in Australia," he said.

"Under the existing legislative regime, pharmacists are able to substitute a different brand of the same medicine when the brand that has been prescribed by the prescribing doctor is not available or is in short supply.

"This bill will allow pharmacists to supply not only a different brand of the same medicine or the same therapy but a different therapy altogether.



"They won't have carte blanche to do this under this legislation.

"The Secretary of the Department [of Health] will have the ability to prescribe a particular type of medicine that can be substituted—it's not carte blanche; it will be a particular type—and pharmacists will be able to do that.

"This is important when a patient needs a particular therapy and that brand's not available, and a different brand of the same therapy

is not available, and the prescribing doctor is not available to issue a new prescription.

"So there are circumstances where this is important for quality of care."

Butler noted that members of the "medical community" had expressed concerns over the legislation, but added that "in their current form, we think these provisions are worthy of support, and we will be supporting them."

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WIZARD PHARMACY FRANCHISEE
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CHECK OUT OUR 2020 YEAR IN REVIEW

Pharmacy Daily

Handyside picks up UQ scholarship

PHARMACY PhD student, Louisa Handyside, is set to focus on instilling a culture of research in community pharmacy, after being named as the 2021 Alan Grant-Taylor Memorial Scholarship recipient.

Pharmaceutical Society of Australia National President, Associate Professor Chris Freeman, and UQ Faculty of Health and Behavioural Sciences Director of Interprofessional Education, Associate Professor Neil Cottrell, are set to act as advisors.

Handyside said she “caught the bug for research” while she was completing an extended research project as part of a Masters of Pharmaceutical Public Health at James Cook University.

“This scholarship will give me the opportunity to build my research skills and explore ideas with other inspiring pharmacists,” she said.

“I hope to take steps to instil a culture of research in community



pharmacy - opening the door to new insights and continual improvements in pharmacy practice, medicines use and patient care.

“My PhD will explore how we can enable primary care pharmacists to be involved with high quality research that makes a real difference.

“I’ll investigate how pharmacists can contribute ideas for research projects, invite their community

to get involved, learn more about research and develop supportive relationships with other pharmacists and academics.

“Ultimately, I’ll be exploring how to support pharmacists to find answers to the most pressing medication-related research questions in their community.”

Handyside added that the scholarship would ease the burden of financial concerns while she completes her PhD.

TWC COVAX training events

TERRYWHITE Chemmart (TWC) is set to host a virtual vaccination event next week as the profession prepares to support the rollout of COVID-19 vaccination (COVAX) services.

The group will also conduct face-to-face training events in Mar and Apr, to ensure the network’s 1,500 pharmacists are equipped with the latest information to support their communities.

TWC Chief Pharmacist, Brenton Hart, said the group was providing support to its pharmacy owners with the Federal Government’s expressions of interest form.

Hart added that TWC has been working on an educational campaign to help address vaccine hesitancy amongst the community in the build up to the rollout of the COVAX program.

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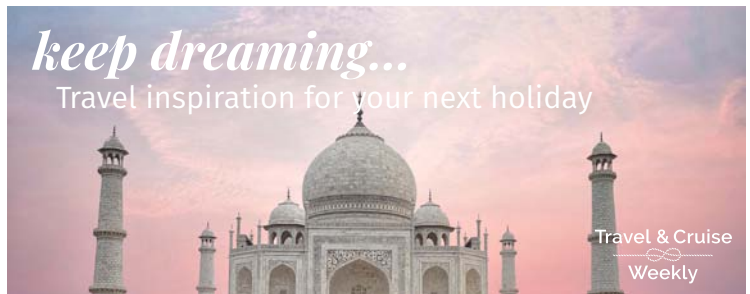
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Dispensary Corner

BREAST cancer is a serious disease, so you have to admire the chutzpah of a group of people who were arrested overnight for trying to change Los Angeles' iconic Hollywood sign to read "HOLLYBOOB".

Six people were taken into custody over the incident, which apparently involved using tarpaulins to change the shape of the "W" and the "D" according to Leonard Calderon of the Los Angeles Police Department.

An LAPD helicopter crew was called to the scene and directed officers to the alleged offenders, according to *NBC*.

"They didn't commit any permanent damage," Calderon said, with the group issued citations for trespassing after telling an officer they had been trying to create more awareness of breast cancer.

A Twitter post from the police department noted that "Los Angeles landmarks are precious to us at LAPD's Hollywood Division, and this was way uncool (not to mention the terrain is quite steep and dangerous)".



Cannatrek signs CWH partnership

MEDICINAL cannabis company, Cannatrek Ltd, is set to develop and bring new products to market, including low-dose cannabidiol (CBD) products on an exclusive basis under one of Chemist Warehouse's (CWH's) brands, as part of a strategic partnership.

Under the deal Cannatrek is set to train and education CWH pharmacists about "the benefits, any potential issues and applicability of medicinal cannabis products for a range of illnesses", the company said.

The company will also become CWH's exclusive telehealth partner for medicinal cannabis alongside general telehealth provider, Instant Consult, while also providing access to touch screens located in-store to enable patients to make enquiries about their eligibility to access CBD medications.

The agreement comes days after the Therapeutic Goods

Administration (TGA) down-scheduled low-dose medicinal cannabis products to Pharmacist-Only - however to date no products that meet the TGA's criteria for an S3 medication have been approved for listing on the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods (ARTG).

Cannatrek CEO, Tommy Huppert, described the partnership as a "game-changer" for Australian patients.

"We are thrilled that CWH has seen the value in entering a strategic partnership with Cannatrek as its medicinal cannabis partner," he said.

"It means that not only will we provide CWH with low-dose CBD products to be sold to consumers over-the-counter given the recent decision by the TGA, but we will work with them to develop new products.

"The ultimate winner will be



Australian consumers, who will get access to high-quality medicinal cannabis products via a visit to Australia's largest pharmacy chain, which has Australia-wide distribution."

Currently Schedule 8 and S4 medicinal cannabis products are only available to patients through the Special Access Scheme (SAS) B pathway or from an authorised prescriber.

Hospital patient wanted 'to get high'

A PATIENT who stole two vials for lorazepam from a British hospital pharmacy's fridge, has escaped with a suspended sentence.

Carlisle Crown Court heard that James Leslie Foxcroft, admitted entering a restricted area at West Cumberland Hospital on 29 Jul 2020, where he broke into the fridge to access the medication.

CCTV footage from the hospital showed the 32-year-old going to a toilet where two broken vials and blood were discovered.

Prosecutors noted that when asked why he stole the injectable medication he had replied that he wanted "to get high".

Foxcroft's defence lawyer noted



that he offered no excuse for his actions and wished to express his remorse to hospital staff for his behaviour.

The magistrate sentenced Foxcroft to a 30-week jail term, which was suspended for 18 months for his actions.

Trainee tech theft charges

OHIO-BASED trainee pharmacy technician, Julie Harleman, is facing four charges relating to the theft of medications from a CVS store she was working in.

The allegations relate to thefts reported between 30 Jun and 06 Oct 2020, the *Dayton Daily News* reported.

The Ohio Board of Pharmacy issued a one-year pharmacy technician trainee licence in Mar 2020, which she surrendered on 19 Oct 2020.

The case has been sent directly to a county grand jury.