

Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features two pages of news.

Tasmanian Guild confirms O'Byrne

THE Pharmacy Guild of Australia Tasmanian Branch has confirmed the appointment of Helen O'Byrne as its new President, as reported by *Pharmacy Daily* (PD 12 Jan).

O'Byrne was elected unopposed, with long-time Branch leader, John Dowling, stepping down having served six terms as President.

Dowling will continue on the Branch Committee as Vice President and as a National Councillor.

O'Byrne said that she was honoured to lead the Branch and to represent pharmacy owners in Tasmania.

Pharmacist triaging fears unfounded

SUGGESTIONS that funding a campaign to direct patients with non-urgent conditions to pharmacies to be triaged rather than Emergency Departments, would be cutting into the role of GPs, is unfounded, Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) NSW Branch President, Chelsea Felkai, believes.

Responding to criticism of the PSA's 2021/22 NSW Pre-Budget Submission from the Royal Australian College of General Practice (RACGP) NSW and ACT Faculty Chair, Associate Professor Charlotte Hespe, Felkai told *Pharmacy Daily* that the policy was likely to lead to more patients being directed to their GP for treatment than to hospitals.

Speaking with the RACGP's *NewsGP* publication, Hespe suggested the program would see pharmacists taking on unnecessary risks.

"Why on earth would you take

on all the risks of being the GP triaging?" she said.

"Do they not understand all the actual clinical risks of that sort of work?"

"That assessment of a basic headache is not just saying, 'go and take a couple of Panadol!'"

However, Felkai noted that "minor ailments are managed in community pharmacy everyday".

"I've never been to an Emergency Department where I was triaged by a GP," she said.

"Not all of these conditions are complex clinical conditions and pharmacists are trained to recognise when a patient needs referral for more complex clinical conditions."

"Triage for minor conditions in the primary care setting would reduce a heavy burden that falls on the emergency department, and would see more patients attend their GPs through referrals by their pharmacist."

"The policy takes into



consideration all areas of NSW, where patients may need to travel a significant distance to the nearest hospital and emergency department or where they may not be able to access a GP.

"We very much see this as a collaboration with all primary care providers."

"Pharmacists and GPs should absolutely collaborate to ensure patients receive the right level of care at the right time and the right cost."

"This proposal highlights a role that pharmacists are already doing, including consulting with and referring patients to their GP when necessary."

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Health programs to drive MDR growth

DIGITAL medication management company, MedAdvisor (MDR), believes its future revenue growth in Australia will be driven through health programs.

In its Dec 2020 Quarterly update to the Australian Securities Exchange, the company reported total revenue for its Australian operations was up 13% for the first half of 2020 compared with the same period in 2019, while the number of digitally connected patients hit 1.8 million.

MedAdvisor noted the revenue boost was generated "largely through pharmacy network growth, which was up to 3,600-plus representing approximately 64% of the pharmacy market".

However, the company said as it continues to expand its network and reach, the opportunity to generate an increasing amount of revenue from patients within the network, and through health

programs will be a key growth driver for future periods.

"Health programs revenue was up 56% on the prior corresponding period as patient volume grew and more sponsors are attracted to the scale and reach of MedAdvisor," the company said.

MedAdvisor added that continued investment in technology to improve user experience was critical to accelerating patient acquisition and ensuring pharmacies benefit from strong digital engagement with their customers.

With a 41% increase in patient numbers using MedAdvisor's app in Q2 FY2020, the company reported



app orders were up by close to 52% and items per order increased by 56% in the quarter compared with the same period in 2019.



Dispensary Corner

POLICE in Essex in the UK went into full tactical mode earlier this week when they received reports of an "illegal rave" which would flout COVID-19 gathering restrictions.

Several squad cars were urgently dispatched to the Saxon Hall venue in Southend, but when they arrived were somewhat bemused to find a crowd of octogenarians queuing to receive coronavirus vaccinations.

Essex Police confirmed they had attended "reports of congestion at the vaccination centre" and that officers had visited the site to assist with traffic management.

However, Dennis Baum, the chairman of the facility, told *Echo News* that when the police arrived they had expected to find teenagers with glow sticks, strobe lights and loud music.

Not so, he said. "Grumpy old men and grumpy old women were in abundance," complete with wheelchairs, walking sticks and walking frames - and problems exacerbated when vaccine supplies were delayed.

"It was absolute chaos and very cold...the car park became chock-a-block with 80-year-old plus drivers," Baum added.

PD Aus Day publishing break

PHARMACY Daily will not be publishing an edition on Mon 25 Jan, ahead of the Australia Day holiday on Tue 26 Jan.

But panic not, we will be back with all the latest relevant pharmacy news, on Wed 27 Jan.

Behaviour bond for harrassing PA

SHEPPARTON Magistrates' Court has ordered a 27-year-old man with an infatuation for a local pharmacy assistant (PA), to stay out of trouble for 12 months after breaching an intervention order.

Daniel Cornell pleaded guilty to three counts of contravening a personal safety order taken out against him by the PA, in Sep 2020, the *Shepparton News* reported.

The Court heard Cornell had breached the order when he entered the pharmacy the woman worked in twice on 12

Sep 2020, and also stood outside the store the following day, when he attempted to speak to her as she walked to her car, calling out, "sorry, I want to talk to you".

The Court was also told that Cornell had sent a private message to the PA on Instagram saying "I love you babe" in the early hours of the morning on 25 Mar 2020, which was followed by a crude message.

Cornell's solicitor told the Court that he had "a crush" on the PA.

The Court issued Cornell with an adjourned undertaking for 12 months to be of good behaviour.

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