



Vax passport app

THE Australian Digital Health Agency has issued a Request for Tender for a new smartphone application linking to users' My Health Record and vaccination records.

To work on both iOS and Android platforms, the app will include a dashboard with easy access to COVID-19 immunisation history, evidence of immunisation, COVID-19 pathology test results and COVID-19 digital certificates for each authenticated dose.

It will also display an "animated tick" to indicate real-time COVID-19 digital status - see tenders.gov.au.

Closing The Gap program in chaos

WIDE-RANGING IT changes to the Government's Closing The Gap (CTG) PBS Co-payment Relief Program (**PD 17 Jun**) have left many Indigenous-identifying patients who previously had years of access to the scheme out of the database, with pharmacists forced to deal with multiple problems since the updates were introduced at the start of the month.

The scheme is applicable to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with a chronic disease, or at risk of a chronic illness, and provides prescription medication at a lower price, or free of charge with a Health Care Card.

A number of pharmacy owners and managers have contacted **Pharmacy Daily** to advise of their concerns, which have also seen patients who were unaware of the program being flagged as Indigenous, with no knowledge or expectation of the change.

Scripts that are mis-categorised are rejected by the new platform,

with little ability for the pharmacist to fix them, according to Andrew Topp, Group Business Manager for the Capital Chemist Group.

"Even our smaller pharmacies have had multiple problems; I can't imagine how often it is happening in a busy pharmacy," Topp said.

The revamp to the program's mechanics, which were introduced with just a few weeks notice on 01 Jul, include the introduction of a centralised patient registration database managed by Services Australia, as well as new PBS Online alerts for CTG dispensing and claiming if there is a discrepancy between scripts and a patient's registration.

Hospital PBS prescriptions can also now be dispensed as CTG by community pharmacies and private hospital pharmacies, and it is no longer mandatory for prescribers to annotate CTG on prescriptions.

However while the new database is supposed to have transferred all patient details from their previous

registrations, it appears this process has not gone smoothly, leading to confusion for patients, prescribers and pharmacists concerned that it will limit medicines access to some of Australia's most vulnerable populations.

The update also requires new patients to be added by a registered PBS prescriber or Medicare-registered Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practitioner, via the Health Professional Online Services (HPOS) platform.

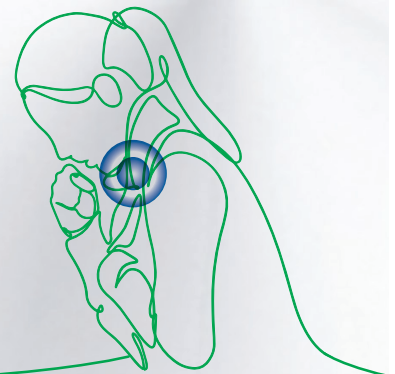
The short notice of the changes, announced in Jun as part of the Seventh Community Pharmacy Agreement, is believed to have left prescribing and dispensing software providers scrambling to update systems accordingly, meaning eligible patients are potentially not being registered for the scheme.

The CTG PBS scheme was first launched in 2010, and in 2019-20 saw more than 7.2 million PBS items supplied, at a total cost to the Government of \$54.5 million.

Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features two pages of news, plus a fact sheet from **CHP Australia**, and a full page from **Choice Pharmacy**.

DRAW THE LINE... when it comes to Cold and Flu relief



Affordable, quality healthcare supporting Australian families

These medicines may not be right for you. Read the label before purchase. Follow the directions for use. If symptoms persist, talk to your health professional.

The APOTEX trademark is under license. Apotex Pty Ltd Macquarie Park NSW 2113. ABN 52 096 916 148. Copyright © CONSUMER-000779. June 2021. All rights reserved.

www.apohealth.com.au



AMH CHILDREN'S DOSING COMPANION IN BOOK OR ONLINE. ORDER NOW.

To find out more go to www.amh.net.au

AMH
AUSTRALIAN MEDICINE HANDBOOK

More Qld pharmacies join COVID fight

THE Queensland Government has enlisted another 82 of the state's community pharmacies to undertake COVID-19 vaccinations, with the additional rollout to commence later this month.

Pharmacy Guild of Australia Queensland Branch Acting President, Chris Owen, welcomed the expansion, adding that up to a further 186 community pharmacies already approved through the Federal Government's EOI process would also join the COVAX campaign beginning in Aug.

The additional pharmacies are in outer-metro, rural and regional areas of the state, where there are already 49 community pharmacies vaccinating against COVID-19.

"The inclusion of community pharmacies is vital for rural and remote communities who don't have access to doctor surgeries or vaccination hubs," Owen said.

However he noted the urgency of the need to vaccinate meant it was



vital that the pharmacy rollout be expanded further.

"Although by the end of this month 131 community pharmacies will be offering this choice to Queenslanders, more needs to be done," he said.

"There's no reason for the other 521 community pharmacies in Queensland that have already

been assessed as suitable by the Commonwealth not to be included in the rollout immediately.

"Given the need to vaccinate as many Queenslanders as quickly as possible, and the decentralised nature of our state, it is imperative that these community pharmacies are brought online, not only in rural and remote areas of the state, but also within the urban centres."

Owen called on the Federal Government to immediately activate the pharmacy workforce for vaccinations, saying if this happens now, more Queenslanders will have access to COVID-19 jabs when more stock becomes available in Sep and Oct.

"We need to protect Queenslanders and stop these revolving lockdowns," he added.

The full list of pharmacies currently delivering COVID-19 vaccinations in Queensland is now at findapharmacy.com.au/qldpharmacy.

Dispensary Corner

AN ELABORATE scam in India has seen thousands of people injected with saline rather than COVID-19 vaccines.

The outrageous scheme saw vaccination drives undertaken around Mumbai, with officials confirming several doctors and other health workers have been arrested for their involvement.

Patients were charged for the immunisations, with an estimated 2,500 people given the fake shots, *CNN* reports.

A total of 14 people have so far been arrested on charges of cheating, criminal conspiracy and even "attempts at culpable homicide," police say.

JUST what happened during America's COVID-19 lockdowns about nine months ago?

While plenty of Netflix and junk food was consumed, it is clear some couples undertook other activities, with a Texas hospital last week reporting the delivery of "an unprecedented number of babies".

More than 100 infants arrived in two stretches totalling just over 90 hours at Fort Worth's Andrews Women's Hospital, with the phenomenon described as a "Texas-sized baby boom".

The influx was considered "rare and exceptional," officials said, adding that at one point nine mothers were ready to deliver at the same time, with all of their newborns arriving over a 40 minute period.

The most popular boy's names were Atlas and Daniel, the hospital said, while six of the baby girls were named Gianna.

MedAdvisor announces US partnership

LISTED digital health company MedAdvisor Limited has announced that its US offshoot, Adheris Health LLC, has entered into a partnership with eHealth, an American company which partners with over 180 health insurers to help the public find essential coverage.

The deal will help Adheris Health's pharmacy partners support their US Medicare patients, while helping US Medicare beneficiaries optimise their prescription drug coverage, the company said.

Under the agreement eHealth's "coverage optimisation technology" will be integrated

into communications for Medicare beneficiaries within Adheris Health's extensive network of about 180 million patients, 140,000 prescribers and 25,000 pharmacies across the US.

The partnership, embodying a commercial model between eHealth and Adheris, "streamlines the Medicare enrolment process for our retail pharmacy partners and their customers, helping patients get into the plans that work for them, while also retaining patients for 25%-40% of our pharmacy partners' prescription business," said Adheris SVP of Partnerships, Mike Roberts.

Guild welcomes new NAPSA team

PHARMACY Guild National President Trent Twomey says as a former President of the National Australian Pharmacy Students' Association (NAPSA) he is well aware of the challenges being faced by the organisation's incoming executive team (*PD* 05 Jul) amid the ongoing pandemic.

He welcomed the new NAPSA committee, saying "the profession's strong and committed representation at the student level is a critical and pivotal aspect of our ongoing growth and success".

Advertising Therapeutic Goods? What you need to know

one year on from TGA mandatory pre-approvals

Since 1 July 2020, advertisers have had to manage their compliance obligations and liabilities without the compliance safety net of TGA mandatory pre-approvals.

In this new compliance environment, advertisers need to be confident they not only understand what the compliance requirements are, but also how to appropriately apply them to advertising.

AdCheck – an expert advertising advisory service – was established to help responsible advertisers minimise their risk in this new compliance environment, and has helped over 100 businesses comply with confidence.

Insights from the AdCheck Experts

1. The TGA has taken strong action against advertising breaches, issuing over \$1,026,500 in fines in the last 12 months.
2. Ensuring advertising is consistent with public health campaigns and advice has never been more important or more scrutinised.
3. With consumer expectations that businesses behave socially responsibly at an all-time high, noncompliance risks not only heavy fines but also brand and reputational damage.
4. Most common compliance issues:
 - a. Missing or incorrect presentation of mandatory statements
 - b. Misleading presentation of claims or benefits
 - c. Restricted representations.
5. An estimated 8 out of 10 ads submitted to AdCheck were assessed to require some form of compliance amendment.
6. Navigating TGAC compliance for digital & social media ads is particularly dynamic and complex. Given the practical limitations of some platforms, advertisers investing in this area should reassess their compliance capabilities and liabilities.



Comply with Confidence



Visit [AdCheck.com.au](https://www.adcheck.com.au)

**“ I STARTED OFF AS A
GRADUATE, NOW I AM A
PHARMACY PARTNER”**

ALEX - PARTNER AT EASTERN CREEK NSW



**JOIN THE
CHOICE PHARMACY TEAM TODAY**

**Email admin@choicepharmacy.com.au
for more information**

 **choicepharmacy**