

**NEW**



## Ferro-Max C™

For higher iron absorption.

Available from Symbion, Sigma and API.

Use only as directed. Consult your healthcare professional if symptoms persist.



### Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features three pages of news.

### Dysphagia focus

THE Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia (SHPA) is taking the opportunity with today being Swallowing Awareness Day, to highlight the impact of swallowing difficulty on medicines safety.

"On behalf of our members we're proud to get behind #SwallowAward2021 and raise awareness around the difficulties of a dysphagia diagnosis," said SHPA CEO Kristin Michaels.

She said the issue was particularly important to pharmacists who can advise whether a suitable alternative is available, or whether it is safe to crush or disperse medicines based on SHPA's *Don't Rush To Crush* document.

## Time to ramp up pharmacy flu vax

COMMUNITY pharmacists are being urged to encourage patients who will not be eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccine until Phase 2a of the Federal Government's campaign, to have the influenza jab in the coming weeks.

Pharmacy Guild of Australia Victorian Branch President, Anthony Tassone, told *Pharmacy Daily* that the success of the 2020 flu vaccination program combined with the phased rollout of the COVID-19 immunisation program, "provides a great opportunity for pharmacies to ensure as much of the population [as possible] is protected against the flu whilst they await eligibility and availability of the COVID-19 vaccination".

"We must not let down our guard against the flu which can potentially be serious and life threatening for some patients," he said.

"This will be a unique year with running two mass and large-scale vaccination programs in parallel

with one another being seasonal influenza and COVID-19.

"With the nature of the phased rollout of the COVID-19 vaccine for priority patient groups – the majority of the Australian population is not planned to receive the COVID-19 vaccine any time before Phase 2a/May 2021, so there is an opportunity for patients to get organised and get protected by receiving an annual influenza vaccination in the meantime.

"Also, there have been some reports that some general practices participating in Phase 1b of the COVID-19 vaccine rollout may receive only 50 doses a week of vaccine, so even when primary healthcare practices do receive it – not all eligible patients in that community will necessarily be able to receive it immediately."

With a number of pharmacies set to join the COVID-19 vaccination campaign from the start of Phase 2a, the Australian



Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) has stated that "co-administration of the influenza vaccine on the same day as the COVID-19 vaccine is not recommended", and that the vaccinations should be provided "a minimum of 14 days apart".

MEANWHILE, the Pharmacy Programs Administrator will provide responses to pharmacies that have applied to take part in the COVID-19 vaccination campaign on Fri.

## make a positive difference

for you & your baby

Formulated to support healthy development  
[www.natalispregnancy.com.au](http://www.natalispregnancy.com.au)

As seen on TV  
**medifacts**

Speak to your Arrotex OTC Sales Representative today or call 1800 276 839

PRE

DURING

POST

Natalis is the NEW pregnancy multivitamin formulated to help support increased nutritional needs across the motherhood journey – from pre-conception to pregnancy and breastfeeding.



Always read the label. Follow the directions for use. Vitamin and mineral supplements should not replace a balanced diet. Do not exceed the stated dose except on medical advice. If you have had a baby with a neural tube defect/spina bifida, seek specific medical advice.



## Few would recommend pharmacy

**POOR** pay, stress and a lack of support are among the factors pushing pharmacists out of the profession, Professional Pharmacists Australia's (PPA's) *2021 Community and Hospital Pharmacists Remuneration Report*, reveals.

The report found the median annual salary for hospital pharmacists was \$100,000, with the average pharmacist earning \$92,500.

However, the PPA noted hospital pharmacists tended to be paid more whether employed under an annual salary arrangement or hourly wage arrangement.

"This is despite the distribution of respondents across pharmacist classifications trending towards lower levels of responsibility for hospital pharmacists and higher for community pharmacists," the union said.

Data from the union's annual survey found that less than a third

of community pharmacists would recommend pursuing a career in the profession, while a similar number of pharmacists employed by discount chains reported their intention to leave pharmacy within the next five years.

The report found that pharmacists who worked for National Pharmacies were the least likely to report that they were planning to leave the profession (6.3%), while 33.3% of those employed by Chemist Warehouse said they were thinking of abandoning their career.

While workplace stress was cited as the main cause of unhappiness across community pharmacy, it was significantly higher for those working for discounters (73%) than their peers employed by banner group stores (55%).

Discount pharmacy employees were also more likely to report that poor pay was a factor in their professional unhappiness (69%)



compared to (46%) for banner group employees.

The report also noted that the prevalence of prescription-based key performance indicators was higher among discounters (32%) than banner groups (17%), with 35% of Chemist Warehouse employees reporting they worked to script targets, while 32% of Priceline Pharmacy pharmacists said they had similar targets.

## UK digital deal

**INDEPENDENT** pharmacies in the UK are being offered the opportunity to compete against their online counterparts through the acquisition of the Co-op Health platform by Phoenix UK, the parent company of pharmacy chains Rowlands and Numark.

The Co-op Health portal allows patients to order repeat prescriptions online or via an app, for collection from any pharmacy in England or delivery to any UK address.

Phoenix said the move would see it offer a "market-disrupt alternative" in contrast to companies offering digital services which "seek to bypass and commercially undermine local community pharmacies". It's understood the system will be rebranded and offered exclusively to Phoenix network members.

## E-script measures extended to 31 Dec

**THE** Federal Government will extend ongoing support for electronic prescription services and delivery of Home Medicine Services until the end of the year, as part of a \$1.1 billion package announced by Prime Minister, Scott Morrison.

The additional funding, which also extends telehealth Medicare Benefits Scheme payments for GPs until 30 Jun, is part of a package to "ensure that key measures remain in place

throughout 2021 to protect the community while vaccinations rollout over the coming months," Morrison said.

The Continued Dispensing Emergency Measure will continue throughout the year, with the PM noting that about 289,000 people have had at least one supply of medicine so far.

Almost four million electronic prescriptions and repeats have already been issued, with about 1.7 million of those dispensed.

## Blooms offering "Biggest Wakeup Call"

**BLOOMS** The Chemist has launched Australia's Biggest Wakeup Call challenge, highlighting the opportunity to access affordable and accessible sleep apnoea testing for people in NSW, WA, Vic, SA and Qld.

A free online Sleep Quiz is also on offer, with the aim of gaining insight into the sleep patterns within the communities where Blooms operates.

"At Blooms The Chemist we are proud to have trained sleep

experts across our pharmacy network who are able to support customers with guidance on solutions to reduce sleep apnoea and its associated systems," said the group's Head of Retail, Emmanuel Vavoulas.

As well as in-store assessments, the Blooms offering includes the option of an overnight at-home sleep test followed by guidance on possible solutions.

The sleep survey can be accessed by [CLICKING HERE](#).

# With you, every step of the way

Helping you thrive with a range of leading pharmacy solutions.  
Join us today – [symbion.com.au](http://symbion.com.au) or email [info@symbion.com.au](mailto:info@symbion.com.au)



## Dispensary Corner

IS A vegetarian lifestyle a more healthy way to live?

Absolutely not, according to residents of the US state of Nebraska, which have declared a "Meat on the Menu Day" as a riposte to neighbouring Colorado where the Governor has proclaimed a voluntary "Meat Out Day" which encourages people to avoid meat one day a week.

Nebraskan leader Pete Ricketts said the Colorado move was a "direct attack on our way of life," noting that meat is a nutritious, protein-rich food - and that beef production is his state's largest industry.

Colorado's MeatOut Day was started in 1985 by a group called the Farm Animal Rights Movement, but has now been formally adopted by Governor Jared Polis.

The initiative aims to promote the idea that vegan diets have been shown to reduce the risk of chronic illnesses including heart disease, stroke, cancer and diabetes, according to an *Associated Press* report.

However in Nebraska no such move is contemplated - probably understandable given that each May is celebrated as "Beef Month" and the state's vehicle licence plates (pictured) even carry the slogan "Beef State" (not to be confused with QAnon's "Deep State").



## Vic docs pay justice bid

SYSTEMIC and widespread underpayment of wages across the Victorian health system has prompted junior doctors in the State to file a class action.

An initial claim has been filed in the Federal Court of Australia against Peninsula Health, with further actions expected to be lodged against other Victorian health services in the coming months.

The case, led by junior doctors and union group, Australian Salaried Medical Officers Federation Victorian Branch, was pursued following the release of the Australian Medical Association (AMA) Victoria Hospital Health Check Survey, which found junior doctors work an average of 16 hours overtime each week, with some reportedly working an extra 25 hours a week.

Class action specialists, Gordon Legal, and Hayden Stephenson and Associates reported that 10,500 junior doctors were seeking payment of unpaid overtime worked over the last six years.

Junior doctor, Dr Karla Villafana-Soto, described the case as a "wake-up call to the Victorian public health network that must stop relying on



tired and underpaid junior doctors to prop up a broken system".

"This is now my eighth year of being a junior doctor and I've worked at several health services in Victoria, and I can tell you this is happening everywhere," she said.

Australian Salaried Medical Officers Federation Victorian Branch President, Dr Roderick McRae, warned that junior doctors were facing "crippling fatigue", which placed patients at risk.

"Our junior doctors are crying out for help," he said.

"Fundamentally this is a systemic failing across our health system.

"Unpaid labour is ingrained into the business model and must stop."

**APP 2021** / GOLD COAST CONVENTION & EXHIBITION CENTRE  
20-23 MAY

**EARLY BIRD CLOSING SOON!**  
**REGISTER NOW**

The Pharmacy Guild of Australia | A COVID SAFE EVENT | TOURISM & EVENTS Queensland

## UQ scholarship

PHARMACY graduates looking to advance their careers are being invited to apply for University of Queensland's Higher Degree by Research (HDR) scholarship.

Applications for the PhD scholarship worth \$28,597 a year close on 28 Mar.

**CLICK HERE** for more information and to apply.

## Win The Greats & All Star Essentials gift pack

Everyday this week Pharmacy Daily & DU'IT are giving away one of their Greats & All Star Essentials gift pack worth RRP \$34.95

DU'IT Australian made functional skincare products are clinically proven to repair, hydrate, soften and smooth skin with visible effects in 1 day. Infused with active moisturising ingredients and essential oils, DU'IT products are free from parabens, mineral oils and propylene glycol.

To learn more, click **HERE**.

Q: What is the percentage of active Urea in Foot & Heel Balm Plus?



To win be the first person to send the correct answer to [comp@pharmacydaily.com.au](mailto:comp@pharmacydaily.com.au)