

Aussie-made COVAX approval

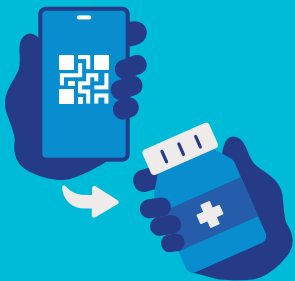
THE Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has approved Seqirus to manufacture AstraZeneca's COVID-19 vaccine (COVAX) in Australia.

The approval will allow the rollout of Australian-made doses of the vaccine to commence within the next few days.



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PPA's lack of details concerns Guild

COMMUNITY pharmacies are unlikely to know whether they are eligible to participate in the COVID-19 vaccination campaign until May, as the Pharmacy Programs Administrator (PPA) seeks to clarify information provided during the Expression of Interest (Eoi) process.

Pharmacies had been expecting to be told whether their Eoi application had been successful or not on Fri, however the PPA issued a letter stating, "this process has resulted in a large number of community pharmacies responding, which is a true reflection of the commitment and dedication of the community pharmacy sector".

"All submissions have now been through a robust initial assessment process," the PPA said.

"To complete the Eoi assessment, the process has identified the need to further clarify the information provided.

"This will enable the Department [of Health] to have a clear view on the expected high level of participation of community pharmacies ahead of the vaccine rollout under Phase 2a [of the national program] and beyond."

The PPA said the clarification process will be completed in Apr, with final assessment activities to be undertaken in May, stressing "individual pharmacies are expected to be notified of the outcome of their Eoi well ahead of the commencement of Phase 2a".

The Pharmacy Guild of Australia contacted the Department of

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Health to flag its concerns over the PPA's letter.

"The Guild has been working with the Department to raise our concerns about the lack of detail being provided to community pharmacies, particularly around the selection process and when all pharmacies deemed suitable will be brought on to provide COVID-19 vaccinations," a spokesperson said.

Capital Chemist Group Business Manager, Andrew Topp, told *Pharmacy Daily* that pharmacies across the group

were disappointed not to receive approval, as had been expected, but stressed they were ready to start vaccinating patients as soon as the vaccines arrive.

However, he noted that the lack of clarity around stock ordering and booking systems was a concern, saying they would be "fundamental to the success of the program".

"Having clarity on these things is so important," he said.

"We need details about the infrastructure to support the vaccination campaign."

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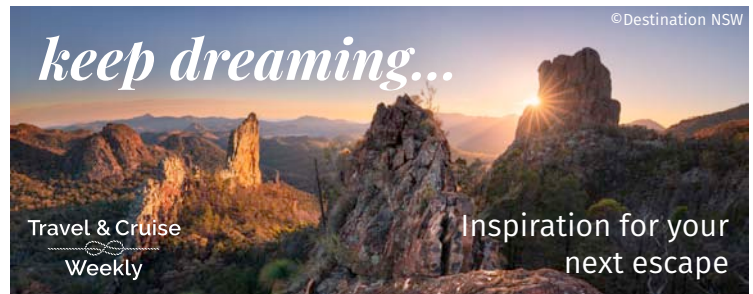
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Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features three pages of news.



Repurposing Rx meds process

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration is conducting a public consultation to understand potential obstacles and incentives to repurposing of prescription medicines that may influence a sponsor's decision to extend an indication for an existing medicine.

[CLICK HERE](#) for more.

Guild accused of 'anti-worker' stance

EMPLOYEE pharmacists' union, Professional Pharmacists Australia (PPA), claims the Pharmacy Guild of Australia is "anti-worker" after not publicly opposing the Federal Government's *Fair Work Amendment (Supporting Australia's Jobs and Economic Recovery) Bill 2021*.

Celebrating the Senate's rejection of four of five "regressive" provisions of the Bill, PPA President, Dr Geoff March, expressed disappointment that the Guild - which represents the interests of pharmacy owners - had not objected to the proposed laws, despite the efforts of employees throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

"During a year of crisis and great challenge, pharmacy workers displayed incredible courage and resilience, working long hours under great stress to support their businesses and to protect the community's health," he said.

"Shamefully, the Guild failed to oppose laws which would strip away pharmacy workers' rights and entitlements.

"But of course, the responsibility does not just fall to the Guild. "Community pharmacy employers also failed to publicly voice opposition to these regressive laws.



"The Guild has continued its anti-worker stance, highlighted by its adversarial appearance at the Work Value case, its push to reduce penalty rates, and support the Industrial Relations (IR) Bill, while feigning concern about poor wages and morale."

March noted that had the Government's Bill made it through the Senate without being watered down, it would have "stripped workers of rights and entitlements in Greenfields agreements, bargaining and part-time employment".

"Australia's pharmacists have made incredible sacrifices, often at great personal risk, to continue

doing their vital work protecting the community's health through the COVID-19 pandemic," he said.

"The fact they faced the biggest attack on their rights and conditions was completely unacceptable.

"The Pharmacy Industry Award was the only health professional award that was highlighted in the IR Bill, mirroring the situation we found ourselves in with the penalty rates case.

"Unfortunately, elements of the IR Bill which were passed will significantly impact casual workers in the pharmacy sector, undermining their rights and access to secure employment."

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NPS Choosing Wisely Week

PATIENTS will be urged to be more proactive in asking if they are getting the right amount of healthcare, as part of NPS MedicineWise's Choosing Wisely Week campaign.

The initiative aims to reduce low-value healthcare, by encouraging patients to discuss their treatment with health providers.

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POINT OF SALE



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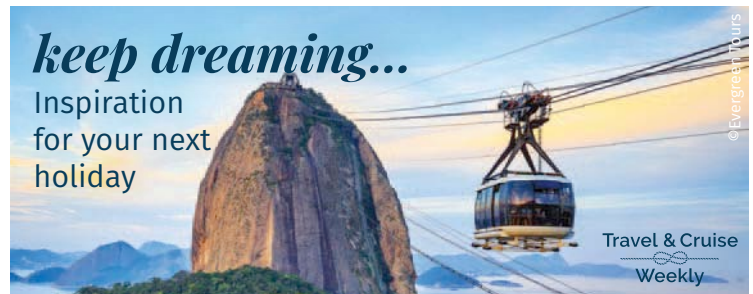


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Dispensary Corner

BENADRYL can tackle more than a chesty cough, with a doctor aboard a flight from New Jersey to Miami, using a shot of the medication to subdue a “disruptive passenger”.

John Yurkovich Jr, was arrested in Charleston, South Carolina, after United flight 728 was diverted, when he attacked a fellow passenger.

Described as a “loving husband, father and successful businessman”, Yurkovich became agitated and restless after taking a trip to the restroom, the *Miami Herald* reported.

Airline officials reported that he took some pills from his carry-on luggage, before returning to his seat, where he began to scream and thrash around.

Yurkovich then took off his face mask and yelled at the passenger beside him, before unleashing a torrent of punches.

The publication reported that a doctor assisted in efforts to subdue Yurkovich, administering a shot of Benadryl in the buttocks.

Twomey focused on full scope push

NEWLY elected Pharmacy Guild of Australia National President, Trent Twomey, has pledged to continue to pursue the organisation’s goal of ensuring pharmacists can work to their full scope of practice.

Twomey was confirmed as the Guild’s new leader after a National Council meeting on Fri, having revealed he was the sole candidate running for the position last week (**PD 18 Mar**).

“This is truly an honour and I enthusiastically look forward to supporting our members and community pharmacy nationally,” he said.

“As pharmacists we should be proud to provide the highest levels of primary healthcare for every Australian community.

“I will be working hard to ensure community pharmacists are allowed to work to their full scope of practice in the interests of patients and the future of our primary healthcare sector.

“This will enable community pharmacies to deliver more services to patients and help ease pressure on other areas of the primary healthcare sector.

“It is time that we are universally recognised as primary health professionals and it is imperative

that our Governments and colleagues in other areas of primary healthcare recognise us as we do them.

“Such recognition will also ensure the skills and expertise of community pharmacists are better and more fully utilised.”

Accepting the role, Twomey hailed the success of his predecessor, George Tambassis, during his seven years as President.

“He has been at the helm for the negotiation and implementation of two Community Pharmacy Agreements which have strengthened the foundations of the profession and helped to ensure the future of the community pharmacy sector,” Twomey said.

“His commitment to community pharmacy and our patients follows a long line of distinguished National Presidents and I am proud to be able to follow a pharmacy leader of such achievement and high standing.”

Welcoming Twomey’s elevation to the Guild Presidency, Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) National President, Associate Professor, Chris Freeman, stressed the need for “strong, inclusive and consistent leadership across all the pharmacy representative



organisations.”

“PSA welcomes a new era of collaboration with the Guild on how we can support pharmacists to realise their scope of practice, and bring better roles, remuneration and recognition to the profession,” Freeman said.

“I have a strong respect for Trent and what he has been able to achieve for the community pharmacy sector.

“I am committed to working to support a close, frank and professional collaboration between the Presidents of the Guild and PSA.

“We have seen in the past when we work together the profession as a whole benefits.”

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