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Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features three pages of news plus our **Summer Spotlight** feature and a full page from Flo.

Go with the Flo

SPRING is in the air, and so to are allergens, which can bring on hay fever.

However, Flo's range of nasal sprays and sinus wash products can help ease symptoms from throat irritation, to itchy nose and congested sinuses, and allow patients to breathe easy.

See **page four** to discover the full Flo range which includes baby and child-friendly sprays.

Prep for summer

WITH summer on the horizon and the countdown to the festive season underway *Pharmacy Daily's* Summer Spotlight highlights some of the must have items for the months ahead.

See **page five** for more.

Australia key to MedAdvisor's future

AUSTRALIAN pharmacy software provider, MedAdvisor, will retain a local focus despite the growth of its business in the US, the company's Managing Director, Robert Read, insists.

With close to 75% of MedAdvisor's \$38.8 million in revenue the 2021 financial year coming from the US, Read told *Pharmacy Daily* that the Australian pharmacy market remained strategically important to the company going forward.

"One of the things people say, 'look are you going to forget about the Australian market and invest solely in the US?'" he said.

"Absolutely not, Australia is, if you think about it in terms of high altitude training, it's a highly regulated, highly fragmented [and] relatively small market," he said.

"So if you can make it work and get it right here, in this context, it has much greater applicability in other markets.

"This is absolutely the place where we want to refine, improve and innovate first."

Read said the business had "evolved pretty significantly" over the last 18 months, with the acquisition of Adheris Health (**PD**

19 Nov 2020) providing greater insight into "the global dynamics around pharmacy, which can also be quite informative for product development and innovation in the Australian context".

Read noted that more than 4,000 pharmacies in Australia were using MedAdvisor as of 30 Sep, an increase of more than 300 stores compared with the end of the fourth quarter of FT21, while patient numbers had jumped by 300,000, to 2.3 million, in the same period.

"I think there's a combination of factors that really come in to help drive that [growth]," he said.

"We're well known for our ability to link patients in with their local pharmacy, give that pharmacy a digital frontdoor, and we've been good at that over many years.

"What more and more pharmacies are realising is the sophistication of our workflow that supports everything from COVID bookings to health services that can be provided, and are provided, whether it be through government, industry, insurers or others, they can come through our platform and do it in a really automated way.



"We're taking a lot of the burden away from pharmacists and that makes the services more accessible and when you make it more accessible, we've found that pharmacists want to do more and more of them because they can see the value that it has for patients, and they can see the revenue that comes through from it.

"We spend a lot of time trying to think through how do you make a pharmacist's life easier, and what steps can we take out from their workflow that they're doing today."

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PhD scholarship

THE University of South Australia is offering a PhD scholarship to implement a peer support network for early career community pharmacists to support their mental health and wellbeing.

The project seeks to build resilience and manage the stresses of being frontline health professionals.

The scholarship will provide the successful candidate with exposure to the research culture of multiple organisations and the community pharmacy sector.

As part of the industry-partnered project, the scholarship recipient will have placement opportunities with the Pharmacists' Support Service in Melbourne (pending easing of COVID restrictions).

The project will be supervised by Dr Vijay Suppiah. **CLICK HERE** for more.

TGA approves Mayne's Nextstellis

MAYNE Pharma expects to launch its novel combined oral contraceptive, Nextstellis (14.2mg estetrol and 3mg drospirenone), in Australia by the middle of next year, after receiving approval from the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA).

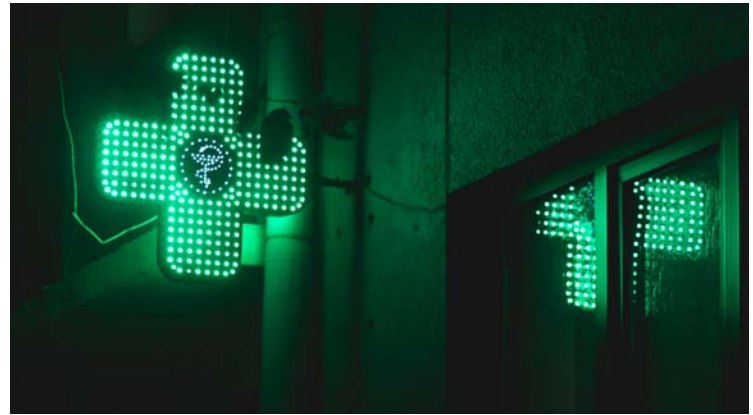
In a statement to the Australian Securities Exchange (ASX), Mayne CEO, Scott Richards, noted Nextstellis was the first new hormonal contraceptive to be given the green-light in Australia in the last decade.

Under the approval, Nextstellis had been granted five years of market exclusivity.

"We are pleased to be introducing Nextstellis to the Australian market," Richards said.

"It had been 10 years since Australian women have had a new contraceptive hormone to consider with their doctor.

"Nextstellis offers an effective, safe and well-tolerated pill with



excellent cycle control and has demonstrated low impact on certain parts of the body."

Welcoming the approval of the medication, sexual health expert, Dr Terri Foran, noted Nextstellis offered an "effective combined contraceptive".

"Combine oral contraceptives continue to be the most widely used method of hormonal birth control in Australia and every

clinician knows that each woman responds differently to hormones," she said.

"This is why it is so important to have a range of contraceptive options, so we can individualise that choice.

"Having another estrogen, estetrol (E4) [option], opens up the possibility that more women will be able to find a combination that suits them."

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Prevention key to managing Omicron

VACCINATIONS remain critical to reducing severe cases of COVID-19 or death, as concerns about a new variant of concern (Omicron) emerge, the World Health Organization (WHO) reports.

In a statement issued overnight the WHO noted that it was not yet clear whether infection with Omicron causes more severe disease than other strains of the virus, including the dominant Delta variant.

“Preliminary data suggests that there are increasing rates of hospitalization in South Africa, but this may be due to increasing overall numbers of people becoming infected, rather than a result of specific infection with Omicron,” the WHO said.

“There is currently no information to suggest that symptoms associated with Omicron are different from those from other variants.

“Initial reported infections were among university students—

younger individuals who tend to have more mild disease—but understanding the level of severity of the Omicron variant will take days to several weeks.

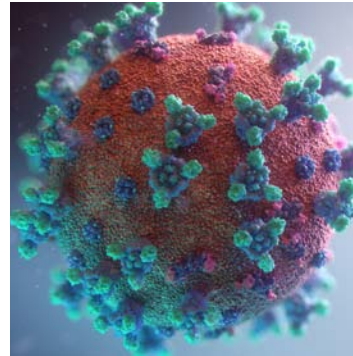
“All variants of COVID-19, including the Delta variant that is dominant worldwide, can cause severe disease or death, in particular for the most vulnerable people, and thus prevention is always key.”

The WHO noted that initial evidence has indicated that patients who had previously been infected with COVID-19 could become reinfected with Omicron more than with other strains of the virus.

The Organization added that it was “working with technical partners to understand the potential impact of this variant on our existing countermeasures, including vaccines”.

“Vaccines remain critical to reducing severe disease and death,” the WHO said.

“Current vaccines remain effective



against severe disease and death.”

The WHO added that corticosteroids and IL6 Receptor Blockers “will still be effective for managing patients with severe COVID-19”, adding that “other treatments will be assessed to see if they are still as effective given the changes to parts of the virus in the Omicron variant”.

Meanwhile, the Organization said studies were ongoing to determine whether the mutations in the new strain would impact the effectiveness of rapid antigen tests.



Dispensary Corner

AN ANTI-VACCINATION activist is facing the possibility of seven years behind bars, after encouraging a seriously ill patient with COVID-19 to leave an Irish hospital.

The 67-year-old patient, Joe McCarron, ended up back in the hospital two days later, and subsequently died, after being urged to abandon treatment by anti-vaxxer, Antonia Mureddu, the *Sunday Independent* reported.

A video has been released showing Mureddu, encouraging McCarron to leave the hospital, despite medical staff warning him that his best chance of recovery was to stay.

However, Mureddu told the seriously ill man that the hospital workers were “going to f***ing kill you”, before leading him out.

Mureddu has already been charged with a series of road traffic offences, including using a fraudulent licence plate and failing to give information to police, but investigators are believed to be seeking to pursue an additional charge of endangerment against the 44-year-old conspiracy theorist.

Appearing before Letterkenny District Court last week in relation to the initial traffic offences, the maskless Mureddu took an interesting approach to defending himself, saying he did not accept the jurisdiction of the court.

Mureddu also rejected the presiding judge’s advice to seek legal representation saying, “absolutely not... I am the king and you are the public servant”.

Win with Dermal Therapy

Dermal Therapy and *Pharmacy Daily* are this week giving away a \$50 Woolworths gift card each day.



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Pharmacy fire

RESIDENTS of the South Australian town of Wallaroo are being warned to stay indoors and keep windows and doors shut due to concerns about toxic smoke coming from a fire at a pharmacy this morning.

The blaze was reported at the store on Owen Terrace at 6am (ACDT), the *Yorke Peninsula Country Times* reported.

South Australian Country Fire Service crews have ordered an evacuation of the area immediately surrounding the pharmacy, warning that “the smoke is extremely toxic”.



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