

Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features two pages of news plus a full page from **MOR Boutique**.

MOR for skincare

BLENDING science with nature, MOR Boutique's skincare solutions range promises to renew and hydrate. See **page three** for more.

Absolute King

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) is warning Australians against taking He Absolute King, after testing revealed it contains undeclared prescription medication, tadalafil.

Consumers are being urged to take any sachets they may have to their local pharmacy for safe disposal, noting supply of the drug is illegal.

Sacklers immune as Purdue folds

MEMBERS of the Sackler family - the owners of OxyContin, Purdue Pharma - will not face any liability for their company's role in the US's opioid epidemic.

The family was granted immunity from opioid lawsuits after US Federal Court Judge, Robert Drain, approved a bankruptcy settlement.

As part of the settlement

the family agreed to pay close to US\$4.3 billion and forfeit ownership of Purdue Pharma.

"This is a bitter result," Drain said.

"I believe that at least some of the Sackler parties have liability for those [opioid OxyContin] claims. ... I would have expected a higher settlement."

However, he added the deal would fund treatment programs.

Qld surpasses 52k pharmacy COVAX

COMMUNITY pharmacies are continuing to play a key role in the COVID-19 vaccination (COVAX) rollout, with Queensland-based stores administering close to 40,000 doses in the last three weeks.

As of this morning pharmacies in the Sunshine State had administered more than 52,000 doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine, according to Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) data.

Pharmacy Guild of Australia Queensland Branch Acting President, Chris Owen, said he was "blown away at the response from Queenslanders wanting to have access to COVAX through their community pharmacy".

"It's not just in the urban areas, but also in more regional areas where we're seeing a great demand," he said.

With more than 700 pharmacies in Queensland currently approved as COVAX sites the average store has administered close to 75 doses each since the start of the rollout in

the pharmacy campaign.

However, Owen noted that two LiveLife Pharmacy stores in the coastal town of Bowen, with a population of 10,377, have been tracking well above that average, administering a combined total of more than 2,500 doses as of last Fri (**PD** 27 Aug).

"It's hard to imagine anywhere else where two community pharmacies have delivered this large of a proportion of vaccines to their community," he said.

Data from the Commonwealth Department of Health (DoH) showed Queensland's pharmacies recorded their highest number of doses administered in the seven days to 20 Aug (18,977).

However, figures from the AIR indicated a slight slowdown in the number of doses administered over the following 10 days to 30 Aug (18,163), with pharmacies in NSW, the Northern Territory and the ACT, all seeing slight declines in the numbers of COVAX shots



given in that period (**PD** 31 Aug).

As of Mon, pharmacies across the country had administered 22.5% of the 1.3 million doses which had been allocated to the sector, the DoH data revealed, with ACT stores topping the list having used 31% of their 28,600 doses, followed by NSW where 29.6% of the 604,700 available shots had been administered at that point.

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COSBOA's Strong voice calls time

THE Pharmacy Guild of Australia has hailed the tireless efforts of former Council of Small Business Organisations Australia (COSBOA) CEO, Peter Strong, who retired yesterday.

Guild National President, Trent Twomey, credited Strong with taking COSBOA from being an "organisation struggling to gain recognition" to being "recognised nationally as the leading voice for small businesses".

"That reputation and the work he has done has benefited the Guild's membership and we thank him for that," Twomey said.

He added that new COSBOA CEO, Alexi Boyd has "already made a major and profound impact in her new role", adding the Guild was looking forward to continuing its close relationship with the small business group.

Corum eyes Sigma deals

PHARMACY software provider, Corum, is looking to extend its relationship with Sigma Healthcare's pharmacy brands, after signing a deal to provide head office solutions to the company's WholeLife network.

In an announcement to the Australian Securities Exchange (ASX) this morning Corum noted it has been providing head office software to Sigma's Discount Drug Stores for more than a decade. "This extends Corum's relationship with Sigma and represents another step in working with the wider Sigma network, which also includes Amcal, Chemist King and Guardian stores," the company said.

Corum Managing Director, Julian Sallabank, said he was looking forward to working with Sigma to achieve continued development for both businesses going forward.

"We are extremely excited about the opportunity to extend our partnership with the Sigma



Healthcare Group and support their continued growth through our head office software," he said.

"Maximising pricing, promotions, and supplier information will drive increased efficiency and profitability for Sigma Head Office and each of their branded and independent stores."

Sigma General Manager of Pharmacy, Adam Goss, said the deal would help WholeLife stores to manage key aspects of their business including marketing, pricing and internal office reporting.

Vic shows support for NSW colleagues

WITH COVID-19 hospitalisations in NSW continuing to rise, pharmacists from the Royal Melbourne Hospital have given their colleagues at Westmead Hospital's Pharmacy Department a boost with a care package.

The parcel of treats including Freddo bars, Crunchies and Chupa Chups, arrived with a minute-and-a-half-long video featuring pharmacists from the Victorian hospital voicing their support for their NSW colleagues.

Having experienced Victoria's extended lockdown last year,

Royal Melbourne Hospital Director of Pharmacy, Paul Toner, urged the pharmacists at Westmead to "keep up the great work", while the oncology team told their NSW peers "you can do it."

The heartwarming clip was posted just over a year after Westmead Hospital Director of Pharmacy, David Ng, and his team posted to show their support for Victorian pharmacists working on the frontline of what was then Australia's most severe COVID-19 outbreak.

CLICK HERE to see the video.

Guild welcomes new NPS CEO

INCOMING NPS MedicineWise CEO, Katherine Burchfield, will strengthen the organisation and the role it plays in the health system, Pharmacy Guild of Australia National President, Trent Twomey, believes.

Welcoming the appointment (**PD** 01 Sep), Twomey said, "the Guild looks forward to continuing and expanding our ties with NPS MedicineWise under the stewardship of Burchfield", with patients the focus for both organisations.

Dispensary Corner

JUST when you think the COVID-19 pandemic couldn't complicate life in pharmacy any further, a glitch in an online platform used to transfer data relating to rapid antigen tests conducted in French pharmacies to a government database has caused a data breach.

The incident saw the results of 700,000 COVID-19 tests along with patients' full names, their contact details, and social security numbers, become openly available online.

The breach was identified when a patient - with an IT background - tried to access her test results using a URL provided by her pharmacist, online journal, *Mediapart*, reported.

The woman noticed the platform was using an open source content management system, and she realised she could easily access other patients' files.

The French General Directorate of Health has since sent pharmacies an email urging them to use approved software compatible with its SI-DEP platform for recording COVID-19 test results.



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