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## Today's issue of PD

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

## Thyroid warning

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has advised health professionals that it has re-categorised hyperthyroidism treatments, propylthiouracil and carbimazole, for use in pregnancy following reported cases of congenital abnormalities.

The medications have moved to pregnancy Category D, which is defined as, "drugs which have caused, are suspected to have caused or may be expected to cause, an increased incidence of human foetal malformations or irreversible damage and reflects the post-market experience with these medicines".

[CLICK HERE](#) for more.

# Funding pharmacy RAT critical: PSA

**RAPID** antigen testing (RAT) has a vital role to play in supporting community pharmacies to keep their doors open in the event that a COVID-19 positive patient enters the store, Pharmaceutical Society of Australia CEO, Mark Kinsela, believes.

Speaking during a webinar on Wed night, Kinsela called on the Federal Government to fund frequent RATs for pharmacy staff, as Australia prepares to live with the virus.

"When we look globally... COVID-19 vaccinations are really critically important for reducing morbidities and mortality from COVID-19," he said.

"Our population are doing an amazing job of vaccinating our community, but it's not going to get rid of COVID - we're going to have to live with COVID for a number of years in the community.

"The key issue that we're arguing for is, firstly to protect pharmacists and pharmacy staff - one of the

big challenges we've got is that patients when they're sick, this is the first place they go when they have symptoms - and we've seen this time and time again, even when they've just come back from their COVID PCR test - they drop past their community pharmacy to get a box of Panadol or get some advice.

"It exposes the community pharmacy to COVID-19 and even though we know that staff are overwhelmingly vaccinated now, it's so difficult for pharmacies that have to shutdown to do a deep clean, to essentially close their business for a number of days.

"What we see as a really vital opportunity for the Government is to fund pharmacy to support RAT of staff.

"That might be prophylactic testing before each shift, so staff can have that confidence that they haven't got COVID at the time.

"Then that would hopefully prevent that pharmacy having to close down and go through the



deep clean."

Kinsela added that the community pharmacy sector could also be used to provide RAT services for other essential workers and for people visiting aged care facilities.

"In aged care where you've got vulnerable populations, you don't want COVID-19 entering into these population groups, even with very high vaccination rates, so prophylactic RAT prior to entering into an aged care facility is really sensible," he said.

"This should be something that community pharmacy can support patients to do."



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## What you need to succeed in pharmacy

**SHIFTING** focus from dispensary sales to front-of-shop services, will be key to boosting the long-term success of independent pharmacies, Pharmacy Alliance Managing Director, Simon Reynolds, believes.

Speaking on the Big Little Business podcast, sponsored by pharmacy e-commerce platform provider Storbie, Reynolds said



pharmacies were developing bespoke services to stand out from other stores.

See **page three** for more.

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## Get on board with COVAX campaign

**PHARMACY** owners who have yet to sign up to administer COVID-19 vaccinations (COVAX) through their stores are being urged to join the national campaign.

Speaking with *Pharmacy Daily* earlier this week, Pharmacy Guild of Australia National President, Trent Twomey, said the organisation was keen to see the number of pharmacies participating increase beyond the 3,640 currently registered.

“We’re in the process of putting the call out to all those pharmacies that have not considered participating in the program yet,” he said.

“We’d really love to have 4,000 pharmacies participating by the end of the month.”

As of Mon 13 Sep, 3,147 of the 3,640 pharmacies that had registered for the campaign had recorded administering doses to patients through the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR), with close to a third of those stores in NSW alone.

Department of Health figures provided to *Pharmacy Daily* on



Wed evening showed community pharmacies had administered more than 522,400 doses - 59% (307,900) of which were given in NSW.

**MEANWHILE**, Guild Executive Director, Suzanne Greenwood, told the Australian Friendly Societies Pharmacies Association (AFSPA) that the organisation was continuing to advocate for improved remuneration for pharmacies involved in the COVAX

rollout.

“We don’t believe the remuneration is adequate,” she said.

“However, we all need to recognise that there has been a win in that we have for the first time got strong recognition out of the Government to be paying pharmacy directly for a service that it’s providing.

“But please be assured that we are not resting on our laurels there, because the remuneration is not what it needs to be.”

### MyEpiPen PSP relaunched

**VIATRIS** Australia is relaunching its MyEpiPen Patient Support Program (PSP) to boost people’s knowledge around the use of EpiPen auto-injectors.

The revamped program includes reminders to prompt patients to get a new prescription, alongside explainer videos and information designed to give them confidence.

**CLICK HERE** for further details.

### World of opportunity for pharmacists

**PHARMACY** is evolving with career opportunities beyond the traditional community and hospital spheres, Queensland Pharmacy Students’ Association President, Rheanna Norris, believes.

Speaking on Raven’s Recruitment’s *Your Pharmacy Career* podcast, Norris, who is in the third year of her degree at the University of Queensland, said her training had opened her eyes to a multitude of career opportunities.

“There’s so many facets of pharmacy in general that it is what you make of it,” she said.

“I say [that I want to pursue a career in] hospital pharmacy now, but there’s so many avenues that you can go down that the world is your oyster.”

Recruitment Consultant, Debbie Capuano, told the podcast that there were “a huge number of fantastic opportunities available for new graduates” who were willing to go outside their comfort zone.

**CLICK HERE** for the podcast.

## Dispensary Corner

**HUMAN** blood, sweat and tears are often the basis of great enterprises - but could be put to even more practical use in space, under a proposal laid out in a new scientific paper published by researchers at the UK’s University of Manchester.

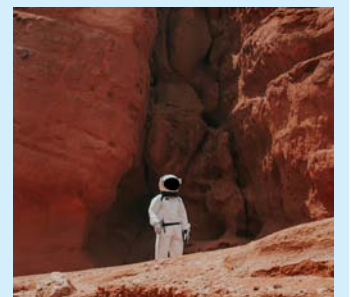
Noting the incredible cost of transporting building materials from earth, the scientists have suggested an alternative for the colonisation of Mars, in the form of “cosmic concrete”, created using human excretions mixed with Martian dust.

The paper noted that human serum albumin, a protein found in human blood plasma, is able to bind Martian or lunar dust to create a product which they have named AstroCrete.

The material has compressive strengths comparable to conventional concrete, and produced even more impressive results when urea was added.

Lead author Dr Aled Roberts said calculations confirmed that a team of six Mars colonists would be able to manufacture about 500kg of high-strength AstroCrete during a two year mission on the red planet.

The peer-reviewed paper was published this month in the *Materials Today Bio* journal.



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*Pharmacy Daily* is part of the Business Publishing Group family of publications.

*Pharmacy Daily* is Australia’s favourite pharmacy industry publication.

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# WHAT'S IN A PHARMACY ALLIANCE?

How do you succeed as a small, independent pharmacy in this day and age? What does a point of difference look like in the pharmacy industry? How important is retail to this equation?

These are some of the topics we covered in our conversation with Simon Reynolds, Founder and Managing Director of Pharmacy Alliance, in the latest episode of Little Big Business. Follow the link below or search for 'Little Big Business' wherever you get your podcasts.

[Listen now](#)

