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## NSW SafeScript platform May rollout

**PRESCRIBERS** and pharmacists from right across NSW will be invited to register for the state's SafeScript real-time prescription monitoring platform from late next month, expanding the current phased approach which has seen it already introduced in some Primary Health Networks (*PD* 08 Nov 2021).

SafeScript NSW is already being used in the Hunter, New England and Central Coast, Nepean Blue Mountains and Northern Sydney areas, with the NSW Health Department website now confirming that "those in other NSW areas will have access from late May 2022".

The clinical tool, developed by Fred IT, provides pharmacists and prescribers with real-time information about a patient's prescription history for certain high-risk medicines, with the aim of helping them make "safer clinical decisions at the point of care".

Medicines monitored by the platform include opioids, benzodiazepines, other sleeping

aids such as zolpidem and zopiclone, psychostimulants like dexamfetamine and methylphenidate, and all Schedule 8 medicines.

Prescribing and dispensing information is collected via the electronic prescription exchange services which are already connected to most prescribing and dispensing software platforms.

Similar to Victoria's Real-Time Prescription Monitoring (RTPM) system, which was also developed by Fred IT, pharmacists who have registered for the system and are using integrated clinical software receive a pop-up notification on their desktop to warn them when a high-risk scenario is detected.

These situations could include records of multiple prescribers of monitored medicines for a patient over the previous 90 days, usage of high doses of opioids, and concurrent prescribing of potentially harmful substances.

SafeScript NSW is also accessible by health professionals not using



integrated software by logging into the platform portal directly.

The system covers private and public scripts, but NSW Health hospitals and outpatient clinic information systems will not be integrated within the SafeScript NSW system.

Use of the platform is not mandatory, but all prescribers and pharmacists in the state will be encouraged to implement the system once it becomes available within their region - more at [safescript.health.nsw.gov.au](https://safescript.health.nsw.gov.au).

### Today's issue of *PD*

*Pharmacy Daily* today features three pages of news, plus a full page from **Bioceuticals ArmaForce**.

### New podcast ep

**RAVEN'S** Recruitment has released the newest episode of its *Your Pharmacy Career* podcast, this time featuring pharmacist Jess Burrey who has practiced pharmacy in rural and regional areas since gaining registration in 2006.

Raised in regional NSW, Burrey cut her teeth working as a Managing Pharmacist in Mount Isa as soon as she gained full registration, and has been practising in Emerald, Qld for the last 12 years, having become a pharmacy owner in 2016, and is also involved in the wider sector as a director of several rural health organisations.

To listen **CLICK HERE**.

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## Dispensary Corner

**NEW** technology developed at University of Technology Sydney can help obviate the COVID-19 symptom of a loss of sense of smell or taste - at least when it comes to whisky.

The "electronic nose" is able to distinguish between different brands, origins and styles of the alcoholic beverage by "sniffing" the liquor.

Of course it's not actually been developed to help COVID-19 patients, but rather as a way of ensuring that fraudsters don't get away with substituting cheap stuff for the real thing.

"Up until now, detecting the differences between whiskies has required either a trained whisky connoisseur, who might still get it wrong, or complex and time-consuming chemical analysis by scientists in a lab," said study leader, Associate Professor Steven Su.

"So to have a rapid, easy-to-use, real-time assessment of whisky to identify the quality, and uncover any adulteration or fraud, could be very beneficial for both high-end wholesalers and purchasers," he said.

The prototype system called NOS.E is designed to mimic the human olfactory system, using eight gas sensors to detect odours and generate a "unique signal matrix," with the technology also having applications in disease detection.

## Guild welcomes Ruston

**PRIME** Minister Scott Morrison has confirmed that Senator Anne Ruston will become Australia's Health Minister if the Liberal-National Coalition is voted in at the upcoming election next month.

Ruston would replace incumbent Health Minister Greg Hunt, who some months ago confirmed he would not be contesting the election (**PD** 03 Dec 2021).

The prospective new Health Minister (**pictured**) is currently Families and Social Services and Women's Safety Minister, with the PM saying "Anne's experience as a senior minister managing a complex portfolio touching millions of lives makes her the right pick to help guide Australia's health system out of the pandemic".

The Pharmacy Guild of Australia welcomed the announcement, with National President Trent Twomey saying the Guild looked forward to "working closely and constructively with Senator Ruston if the Coalition is re-elected".

"A priority is to ensure a commitment is made that the current model of community pharmacy, including the location



rules which ensure accessibility to pharmacies for patients across the country, is maintained," he said.

Twomey also flagged a focus on ensuring community pharmacists can work to their full scope of practice, noting that significant shortages of primary healthcare professionals are "putting huge pressure on doctors and emergency departments".

"Having community pharmacists prescribe, dispense, administer and review medicines is not only common sense, but good health policy that helps to improve patient outcomes," Twomey added.

Other Guild priorities include seeking commitments on reducing the general co-payment on PBS scripts from the current \$42.50.

### Arma patients

**BIOCEUTICALS** is encouraging pharmacies to "arma" their customers against cold and flu symptoms by using its ArmaForce product - details on **page four**.

### CannaTrek flags Vic development

**MEDICINAL** cannabis producer CannaTrek this morning confirmed it had purchased several key sites in the Vic regional city of Shepparton, as part of a major project to develop a "green energy" powered facility creating up to 400 local jobs.

The first phase will see the creation of a 1.5 hectare outdoor grow area, with the capacity to produce up to 10 tonnes of dried premium-grade cannabis flower annually.

When fully operational the project may expand to include a 16-hectare glasshouse and post-harvest operation, with Vic Minister for Regional Development, Mary-Anne Thomas confirming the company will receive a grant under the Regional Jobs Fund.

"This project will contribute to our country's cutting edge medicinal cannabis industry, while growing jobs right here in regional Vic," she said.

Cloned plants will be sourced from CannaTrek's Qld facility, while the project will utilise renewable and low-emission energy as much as possible.

### UK approves more COVID immunisations

**BRITAIN'S** Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) has given approval for Moderna's Spikevax COVID-19 vaccine for use in children aged six to 11 years.

The UK tick follows a similar approval by the European Medicines Agency early last month, with the MHRA also confirming a comprehensive surveillance strategy monitoring the safety of all UK-approved COVID-19 vaccines.

The MHRA has been the first regulator globally to also approve the Valneva whole-virus inactivated COVID-19 vaccine.

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## CWH wins beauty gong



**CHEMIST** Warehouse has taken out the "Top Beauty Retailer" category in an awards ceremony hosted by e-commerce supplier Power Retail.

The "All Star Bash" event held earlier this month in Melbourne

announced the win, with the Beauty category coming alongside other retailing accolades such as Number One Online Retailer (won by Bunnings Warehouse) and Best Email Marketing (taken out by Adore Beauty).

## Ukraine equivalence tables published

**THE** International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) has published new "tables of equivalence" between medicines registered in Ukraine and those available in other countries.

The organisation said the work "aims to facilitate the provision of pharmaceutical care to refugees from Ukraine and to support healthcare professionals providing this care".

Priority in the new document has been given to chronic non-communicable diseases that require continuation of treatment, with the tables including medications for asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, mental health, cardiovascular diseases and diabetes.

Oral contraceptives are also



listed, with FIP saying the move is part of its response to the appeals of member organisation, the All-Ukrainian Pharmaceutical Chamber.

The tables include the ATC classification and INN of selected medicines, their name in the Ukrainian language (both in Cyrillic and Latin alphabets) and also brand names, as well as dosage forms and manufacturer details.

The document is available for download now at [fip.org](http://fip.org).

## NAPSA opens nominations

**THE** National Australian Pharmacy Students' Association (NAPSA) has opened nominations for its Executive committee for 2022/23.

Voting for the President and Board members will take place at the upcoming NAPSA AGM, with nominations and applications open until 02 May at 5pm AEST.

"The NAPSA Executive is responsible for the day-to-day running of the organisation for the year," according to the NAPSA website, noting that "passionate pharmacy students, even those with limited NAPSA experience, are encouraged to consider this incredible opportunity to lead an organisation encompassing hundreds of pharmacy students from across the country".

Positions up for nomination include the President and seven Executive Directors, and post-election further positions will be delegated such as Secretary and Treasurer.

Full details and nomination forms at [napsa.org.au](http://napsa.org.au).

## CGM onto PBS

**THE** Federal Govt has confirmed the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme listing of continuous glucose monitoring (CGM) systems for Australians with type 1 diabetes.

The new scheme expands current availability of CGM to people of all ages, beyond the current program which only applies to those who are under 21 years old.

It will allow patients to monitor blood sugar for \$32.50 a month.

## Pharmacy Guild Update

### Pharmacy industry getting together

**PHARMACY** Connect 2022 will be held from 1-3 September at the Hilton in Sydney's CBD.

The conference's focus is on meeting the needs identified by pharmacy owners, pharmacy managers, and manufacturers.

Kos Sclavos AM said planning for the event was well underway and encouraged people to get in early to take full advantage of the Early Bird rates.

"Two speakers that will be a huge draw for attendees are Peter Baines OAM and Kim Brennan AM," Mr Sclavos said.

"Peter has spent the best part of his career leading teams as a strategic advisor in the face of international crises and disaster. He was front and centre in working on the ground following the 2002 Bali bombings, the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami and the 2011 Japanese tsunami."

Kim Brennan, an Olympic gold medallist in rowing, "transferred her sporting skills to become an emerging trailblazer in technology implementation for a management consultancy".

Register at [pharmacy-connect.com.au](http://pharmacy-connect.com.au).

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