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Petrus

Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features two pages of news, plus a full page from Sigma Healthcare.

ACT to subsidise training courses

PHARMACY graduates and assistants in the ACT are being given the opportunity to upskill for free, through the Territory's JobTrainer initiative. Skills Canberra has added four training courses run by the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) to the JobTrainer program.

PSA ACT Branch President, Olivia Collette, said the decision to add pharmacy programs to the scheme was "a welcome opportunity for pharmacy managers, to upskill their staff so they are suitably prepared to manage patient needs".

Access to COVID treatments critical

MEASURES need to be implemented to ensure that supplies of COVID-19 oral treatments are made available to those in need when they need them, Pharmacy Guild of Australia National President, Trent Twomey, believes.

Commenting on the arrival of the initial supplies of Lagevrio and Paxlovid - which received approval from the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) last month (PD 20 Jan) - Twomey said the initial rollout of supplies to ensure high-risk patients have access to them would be critical.

The two treatments have been given the green-light to treat patients with mild to moderate COVID to prevent deterioration to more severe cases requiring hospitalisation.

"Community pharmacies look forward to receiving the delivery of new COVID-19 oral treatments to help reduce the severity of COVID," he said.



"Providing at-risk Australians with a treatment option that can be managed in the community will reduce pressures on our hospital system and allow community pharmacies to continue to play an important role on the COVID-19 frontline.

"Each and every community pharmacist will be better armed to help the fight against COVID once supply becomes available.

"We look forward to working with government on getting more detail around when the COVID

oral treatments will be listed on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme and can start rolling out to communities around the country.

"Vaccination remains the most effective way to protect yourself and your family, and you can receive your vaccine in a community pharmacy, near where you live."

The treatments should be commenced within five days of a patient developing symptoms or recording a positive COVID-19 test result.

Seeto to MC Guild's IWD brekkie event

PHARMACY Guild of Australia Queensland Branch Vice President, Amanda Seeto, will host the organisation's annual International Women's Day (IWD) breakfast next month.

The COVID-Safe event will take place at the Ballroom at Victoria Park in Brisbane on 08 Mar, with Queensland's new Governor, Dr Jeannette Young, to deliver the keynote address.

Sigma's end-to-end DAA solution

SIGMA Healthcare's pharmacy franchisees are being offered access to the group's Sigma Pak dose administration aid (DAA) solution.

The system aims to support pharmacies to continue to deliver and grow their DAA services.

See **page three** for more.

SR
Pharmacy Business Sales
— Sue Raven

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AMH
AUSTRALIAN MEDICINES HANDBOOK

Dispensary Corner

DISCOUNT giant, Chemist Warehouse, appears to know the way to a Kiwi's heart, launching new partnerships with all five of New Zealand's Super Rugby Pacific franchises today.

Marking the landmark deal the group rolled out a new social media campaign starring All Blacks in their provincial colours helping out at stores around the country, while providing status updates to one of the country's greatest players, Dan Carter.

While Blues' flanker, Dalton Papalii, Hurricanes' prop, Tyrel Lomax and Crusaders' fullback, Will Jordan, displayed plenty of potential with their shelf-stacking skills, pharmacy assistants in Hamilton and Dunedin can be quietly confident that neither Highlanders' wing, Jona Nareki, nor Chiefs' hooker, Samisoni Taukei'aho, will be taking their jobs any time soon, given their cosmetic tips - although Chemist Warehouse NZ CEO, Azman Haroon, described Taukei'aho as "an asset" to the team.

CLICK HERE to keep an eye on the campaign, which is set to be rolled out throughout the day.

Accreditation landmark

PHARMACIST accreditation is set to continue to play a vital role in ensuring the profession remains at the forefront of medicines safety, Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) National President, Associate Professor Chris Freeman, believes.

Marking 25 years since the launch of the Residential Medication Management Review (RMMR) program this month, Freeman said the accreditation process had "paved the way for the establishment of innovative models of care in Australia".

"On behalf of the profession, I thank all accredited pharmacists for the critical support they continue to provide to their patients, aged care facilities and other health professionals," he said.

"You continue to create a solid platform for future pharmacy services.

"As of Jan this year, Australia has over 2,000 accredited pharmacists across the nation.

"However, given the high demand for this service and the clear gap between those who need a medication review and those who have received one, we need more pharmacists to become accredited. This is critical service that directly supports the Quality and Safe Use of Medicines National Health Priority Area."

Chair of the PSA's Interdisciplinary Team-based Care Community of Specialty Interest, Debbie Rigby, who has also chaired the Australian Association of Consultant Pharmacy, said medication review programs conducted by accredited pharmacists "have been the success story of professional programs funded through Community Pharmacy Agreements".

Consultation on draft NMP extended

FEDERAL Health Minister, Greg Hunt, has announced that the consultation period for feedback on the draft National Medicines Policy (NMP) will be extended until Wed 02 Mar.

The move gives individuals and groups seeking to provide commentary on the NMP an additional two weeks to make submissions, with the process originally scheduled to conclude

on Wed 16 Feb.

The NMP Review Committee, led by Deputy Chief Medical Officer, Professor Michael Kidd, is expected to conclude the review at the end of Mar.

The updated NMP aims to create an environment which supports equitable, safe, timely and affordable access to medicines for Australian patients.

Guild Update

COVAX surge

FROM a staged rollout in the second half of 2021, vaccinations against COVID-19 through community pharmacies continue to surge.

Latest data places pharmacies at the centre of the national effort against COVID-19.

By Christmas Eve 2021, three million vaccinations were delivered by pharmacies.

With the sector open and trading across the Christmas-New Year break, this rose to four million by 18 January and has now passed five million.

As Pharmacy Guild National President, Professor Trent Twomey, says: Trusted, highly professional community pharmacies are leading the national effort to return to normal, or at least to a 'new normal' economic and social way of life - schools are back, offices are reopening, travel resuming and supply chains gradually returning to full operation.

Enquiry through the Guild's www.findapharmacy.com.au website has seen a massive upswing, to book booster doses but also to locate Rapid Antigen Tests under the new concession card holder scheme.

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SigmaPak

Sigma Healthcare can help Sigma branded pharmacies provide better health outcomes

Sigma Pak is an end-to-end, Dose Administration Aid (DAA) solution. Sigma Pak is a comprehensive, cost-effective service that can provide you with improved workflow efficiencies*, with blister consumables you can conveniently order through your Sigma trading account. This can help you to continue to deliver and grow your DAA service, which supports the health and safety of your patients, and maximise your 7CPA opportunities.

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*Compared with more manual DAA management methods



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