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Del Piano, et al. 2010, *Journal of Clinical Gastroenterology*, Vol. 44, S30-S34.; Reid, G, et al. 2003, 'Oral use of Lactobacillus rhamnosus GR-1 and L. fermentum RC-14 significantly alters vaginal flora', *FEMS Immunology & Medical Microbiology*, Vol. 35, No. 2, pp.131-134. Funded by Procter and Gamble, NSERC and Kidney Foundation of Canada; Diop, L, et al. 2008, 'Probiotic food supplement reduces stress-induced gastrointestinal symptoms in volunteers: a double-blind, placebo-controlled, randomized trial', *Nutrition Research*, Vol. 28, No. 1. Sponsored by Lallemand SAS.



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Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features three pages of news, a front cover from Flordis.

Change in the offing at AFSPA

WORK is underway to develop a new Australian Friendly Societies Pharmacies Association (AFSPA) constitution to pave the way for a significant restructure of the organisation.

Following a review of the association's structure and advice from Canberra-based law firm, BAL Lawyers, AFSPA members are set to vote to transition from a state-based model to a nationally regulated Company Limited by Guarantee.

The AFSPA Executive reported that a comprehensive review of the association's constitution and structure had identified limitations in its current arrangements.

The Executive noted that "the requirement for membership to be only for Friendly Societies owning pharmacies excludes many interested stakeholders and prevents future opportunities".

AMAQ continues to 'cry wolf': Guild

REPRESENTATIVES of the Australian Medical Association Queensland (AMAQ) are being urged to rejoin the steering committees of two major trials involving pharmacists.

Pharmacy Guild of Australia Queensland Branch President, Chris Owen, suggested the medical organisation would be better informed about both the Urinary Tract Infection Pharmacy Pilot - Queensland (UTIPP-Q) and the proposed North Queensland Pharmacy Scope of Practice Pilot (NQSPSP), if it returned to the table, rather than sniping from the sideline.

Following fresh criticism from the AMAQ of the Queensland Government's decision to extend the UTIPP-Q program, which inaccurately suggested the trial was linked to the NQSPSP, Owen said representatives of the medical profession were "crying wolf".

"Despite repeated instances informing the AMAQ that the UTIPP-Q and the NQSPSP are separate pilots, the AMAQ continues to interconnect and confuse them for their own cheap political purposes," he said.

"The AMAQ should have



remained on the steering committees for both pilots, they are more than welcome to rejoin but I gather that would give them the correct information and expose their misleading statements about both pilots.

"Unoriginally, yet none the less predictable, the AMAQ's go-to word is once again 'dangerous'.

"That's the same word that they and other doctor lobby groups like the RACGP used to describe community pharmacists when vaccinations commenced in 2014.

"There has been over six million vaccinations safely administered nationwide by community pharmacists since 2014, which includes COVID-19 vaccinations, Influenza and many others."

Owen accused the AMAQ of being obsessed with attacking

pharmacists rather than solving issues with the medical profession, such as "doctor block".

He also called on the AMAQ to provide evidence of claims that "at least 240 patients who were treated by pharmacists" as part of the UTIPP-Q "had complications", noting the Queensland University of Technology UTIPP-Q Evaluation Report had shown 87% of women had their symptoms resolved safely through the trial.

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Probiotic boost

FLORDIS is rolling out its new range of therapeutic probiotics, Ther-biotics.

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See today's **cover page** for more.



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*Reference: 1. Lang C, et al., Planta Med 2015;81:968-974. Supported by Engelhard Arzneimittel GmbH & Co. KG.



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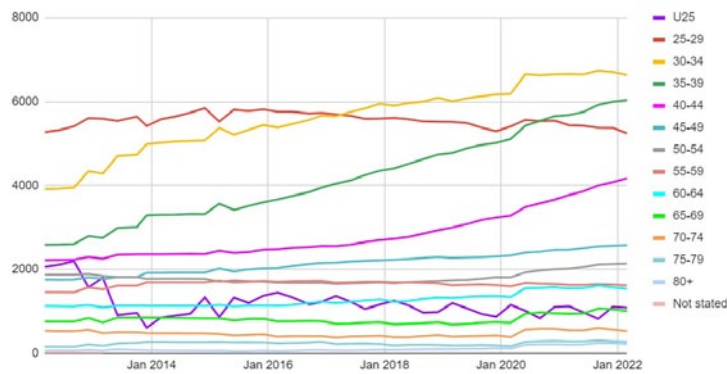
PROFESSIONAL registration data released last week shows the number of pharmacists aged 25 to 29 years holding general registration has dipped to an all-time low.

The statistics from the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) revealed that 5,246 25 to 29-year-olds currently have general registration, down from 5,844 in Dec 2017, and 27 fewer than the previous low, recorded in Mar 2012 - when the first registration report was released.

Despite professional registration figures hitting an all time high of 36,283 in Mar 2022, the number of pharmacists holding any form of registration with the Pharmacy Board of Australia has fallen from 8,915 in Mar 2012, to 7,889.

As a proportion of the total registrants, pharmacists under 30 years currently account for 22%, compared with 34% in Mar 2012, and 19.2% of general registration holders, down from 30.9% in 2012.

Pharmacy Board of Australia general registration by age group



While general registration data shows a decline in the number of pharmacists aged 30 or younger, 57.6% of the profession is under 40 years of age, marginally down when compared to the original statistics from Mar 2012.

The latest numbers revealed growth in general registration numbers among pharmacists aged 35 to 54 years, with growth strongest in the 40 to 44-year-old aged group.

The new registration numbers also showed a fall in the number of pharmacists holding non-practising registration - down 60 from 1,223 in Dec 2021.

Declining numbers of non-practising pharmacists were recorded across most age groups, with the 45 to 49 and 65 to 69 years bracket the exceptions.

There was also a fall in numbers on the pandemic sub-register, down to 1,888 from 1,950.



Weekly Comment

Welcome to **Pharmacy Daily's** weekly comment feature. This week's contributor is Leeza Vuong, TerryWhite Chemmart Milton



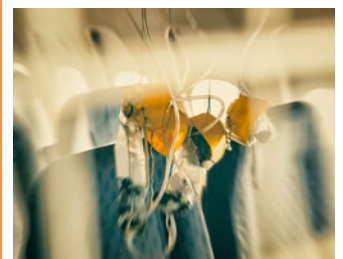
Fit your oxygen mask first

LAST week I was privileged to attend the TWC Masterclass – dedicated to pharmacist education.

Over the course of the three days, there was an extensive program of clinical and leadership development that helped to reignite the spark (that has been dimmed since the start of pandemic) for delivering truly transformational health care for my community.

But the one other thing that really resonated with me and many of my colleagues in the room was this reminder that in order to be at the centre of health and care in our communities, we must first take care of ourselves – the old adage of 'fit your oxygen mask first before helping others rings true' – and there are so many times where, as pharmacists, we often forget this through a true desire to help everyone else.

Since coming home, after getting to spend a few days on 'me', I can honestly say that I'm going to put myself first a little more than usual – because I know if I do that, I can do more for those who need me the most.



Priceline ditches Ben Caseys for Jul



PRICELINE Pharmacy staff are set to showcase 'Sisterhoodies' rather than Ben Caseys this month to help the Priceline Sisterhood Foundation surpass its \$10 million fundraising milestone.

Designed by Priceline Ambassador, Chrissie Swan, and fashion designer, Rebecca Thompson, the exclusive range of Sisterhoodies aim to celebrate and champion women.

The campaign aims to boost funds raised by the Foundation from just over \$8.65 million to

the \$10 million mark, and will run until 27 Jul, with stores inviting Priceline customers to round up their purchases by \$3 or more to enter a draw to win one of 400 Sisterhoodies.

"I was chuffed to work on this campaign with my best friend Rebecca," Swan said.

"Strong women wear their hearts on their sleeves, so I can't wait to see Aussies flocking to their local Priceline to support this worthy cause and help the foundation reach its \$10 million goal."

Orencia shortage

NORMAL prescribing of abatacept (Orencia) is set to resume, with the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) removing its shortage notification for subcutaneous preparations.

In a notification issued this morning the TGA confirmed that the Serious Scarcity Substitution Instrument (SSSI) had ceased for the drug.

Pharmacists have been urged to counsel patients against stockpiling of Orencia products, with the TGA noting that "stock is available for all patients".

"Patients may switch back to, and new patients may be initiated on, any of the Orencia presentations (intravenous or subcutaneous) as deemed appropriate by the treating physician," the regulator said.

CLICK HERE to read the TGA statement in full.



Dispensary Corner

AFTER spending considerable time and effort to become a pharmacist, it's baffling how some are willing to throw it all away by facilitating scams.

Having joined one of the most trusted professions around, 37-year-old US pharmacist, Christina Bekhit, is now facing up to 16 years behind bars for issuing falsified COVID-19 vaccination certificates.

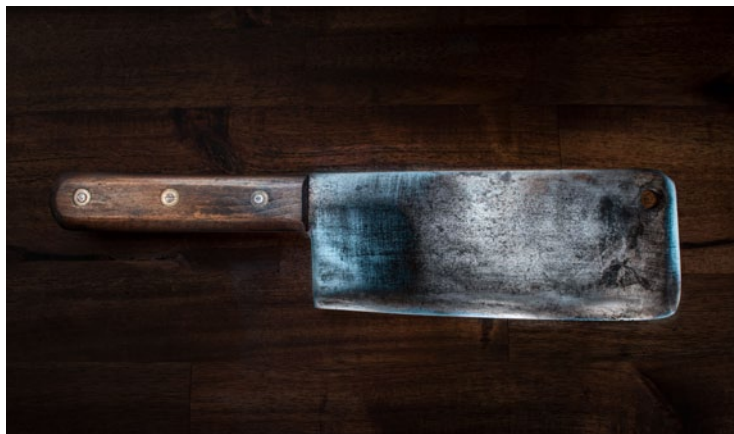
The New Jersey-based pharmacist was arrested last month after selling a fake vaccination record card to an undercover police officer for US\$250 in Jan.

Bekhit allegedly told the officer, "if anyone you know wants a vaccine card, bring them to me", explaining she would record falsified information into the New Jersey Immunization System database.

Two other undercover officers availed of Bekhit's services in Feb and Mar, before the police arrested her on 22 Jun.

Dispensary Corner feels the risk/reward of this behaviour shows it isn't worth it.

Hunt for bicycle bandit



SOUTH Australian Police are searching for a Caucasian man following an armed robbery at a pharmacy in Adelaide last week.

The bandit entered the South Road Pharmacy shortly after 3pm on Wed 29 Jun, brandishing a meat cleaver and demanded prescription medicines.

SA Police reported that the man, who was described as being in his 20s, escaped on a bicycle.

The suspect was wearing grey tracksuit pants, a green woollen jumper, dark-coloured shoes and a black cap with a surgical mask during the raid.

Police reported that he was carrying a black backpack and rode off on a grey bike, wearing a

purple helmet.

The suspect was captured on CCTV making his getaway with a white package on the handlebars of the bike, 7News reported.

Staff from a nearby medical centre told the broadcaster that a young pharmacy assistant had run out of the store screaming that the attacker had held the cleaver to the pharmacist's neck.

However, SA Police noted that "thankfully, no one was physically injured during the incident".

Wed's raid was the second robbery at the South Road Pharmacy in the last three months, with a thief targeting the store in Mar, when a quantity of Valium was stolen.

More vaping fines

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) is continuing its efforts to clamp down on unlawful advertising of nicotine vaping products, issuing fresh fines.

NSW-based business, Precision Pharmaceuticals Pty Ltd, and one of its executive officers have been issued with infringement notices of \$26,640 and \$2,664 respectively, for breaches of advertising rules.

The TGA alleged that Precision Pharmaceuticals unlawfully advertised nicotine vaping products on its website.

"The website URL, trading name and website content allegedly promotes the use and supply of nicotine vaping products," the regulator said.

"The TGA alleges that consumers could view advertising of the nicotine vaping products without a doctor's prescription, which is illegal."

The TGA also directed the company to cease promoting the use and supply of nicotine vaping products to Australian consumers.

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EDITORIAL

Editor in Chief and Publisher – Bruce Piper

Editor – Nicholas O'Donoghue

Contributors – Adam Bishop, Myles

Stedman, Janie Medbury

info@pharmacydaily.com.au

ADVERTISING AND MARKETING

Sean Harrigan, Hoda Alzubaidi

advertising@pharmacydaily.com.au

BUSINESS MANAGER

Jenny Piper

accounts@pharmacydaily.com.au

Suite 1, Level 2, 64 Talavera Rd
Macquarie Park NSW 2113 Australia
PO Box 1010 Epping NSW 1710 Australia
Tel: 1300 799 220 (+61 2 8007 6760)

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