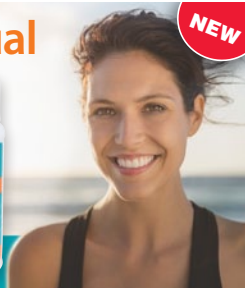


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Today's issue of *PD Pharmacy Daily* today features three pages of news.

## Antiviral eligibility changes welcomed

**MOVES** to expand the eligibility criteria for patients to access COVID-19 oral antivirals, are being welcomed by the pharmacy profession.

In response to rising COVID-19 cases and hospitalisations, Federal Health Minister, Mark Butler, announced that all Australians aged 70 years and older who test positive to COVID-19 will now be able to be prescribed Paxlovid (nirmatrelvir and ritonavir) or Lagevrio (molnupiravir) through the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS).

Under the revised program, patients aged over 50 years and Indigenous Australians over 30 years of age with two or more risk factors for severe disease, and immunocompromised patients aged 18 years and older, will also be eligible under the new criteria.

"These oral antivirals dramatically reduce the risk of severe disease particularly for older Australians and will help keep people out of hospital," Butler said.

"The former Morrison Government bought hundreds of thousands of doses of these medicines that have been sitting on a shelf instead of being used to help people who are at risk of severe illness.

"I'm pleased this will change, with millions more people now eligible for these treatments."

The changes to the eligibility criteria have been welcomed by both the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) and the Pharmacy Guild of Australia.

However, a PSA spokesperson said the Federal Government needed to be "pragmatic and agile in response to increasing infections".

"PSA has suggested there should be a process to triage high-risk patients, refer them to a prescriber and ensure rapid supply," they said.

Acting Guild National President, Nick Panayiaris, said the Government's decision was a positive step.

"There has been some concern



recently that while there are plenty of antivirals in stock, patients have been having difficulty getting access to them because of prescribing restrictions that have been in effect," he said.

"There have also been fears that the abundant stocks could expire before they are able to be dispensed because of their relatively short shelf life.

"These moves announced by Minister Butler are very sensible ones and signal further positive steps in helping to manage the pandemic."

## ACP launches in-house journal

The Australasian College of Pharmacy is launching a new online academic journal, *Pharmacy at the Frontline*, for its members.

ACP President, Michelle Bou-Samra, said the quarterly publication will provide education and research in clinical pharmacy, practice and pharmacy leadership, and management.

The inaugural edition features a range of CPD-accredited content, plus articles about pain management and key information pharmacists need to know about Monkeypox.

The next edition of *Pharmacy at the Frontline* is due to be published in Oct.

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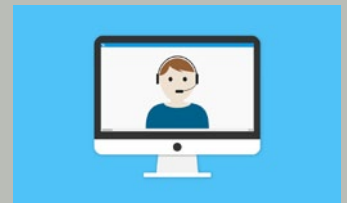
MedView

eRx script exchange

## DoH antiviral eligibility update webinar

AUSTRALIA'S Deputy Chief Medical Officer, Professor Michael Kidd, will host a webinar focused on the update eligibility for COVID-19 oral treatments tomorrow at 1pm (AEST).

Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) National President, Dr Fei Sim, and Australian Medical Association (AMA) National Vice President, Dr Chris Moy, will join Kidd to discuss the changes,



announced by Federal Minister for Health and Aged care, Mark Butler, over the weekend.

[CLICK HERE](#) for more.

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### Dispensary Corner

**THE** controversy around the US Supreme Court's recent Roe vs Wade decision has prompted lots of outrage, but some have come up with some more practical options including a proposed "floating abortion clinic" in the Gulf of Mexico.

The initiative would provide a facility for women in southern states which have outlawed the procedure, located in Federal waters and offering first trimester surgical abortions.

The idea is still only in early stages, with fundraising through a non-profit organisation dubbed PROWESS which stands for "Protecting Reproductive Rights of Women Endangered by State Statutes".

**AND** perhaps on a similar topic, a pregnant woman who received a fine for driving alone in a US transit lane unsuccessfully opposed the penalty, after claiming her unborn baby counted as a second person in the vehicle.

The lady from Dallas, Texas, argued with police officers who pulled her over at a checkpoint in a HOV (High Occupancy Vehicle) lane on a local freeway.

Asking her if she was alone, "I pointed to my stomach and said 'my baby girl is right here...she is a person,'" the woman said, but the policeman responded by saying "oh no, it's got to be two people outside of the body".

## AMAQ hits out at UTIPP-Q decision

**QUEENSLAND-BASED** medical groups are continuing to criticise moves to empower pharmacists to diagnose, prescribe and dispense antibiotics to treat urinary tract infections (UTIs).

The Australian Medical Association Queensland (AMAQ) said the State Government's move to implement the services provided through the UTI Pharmacy Pilot - Queensland (UTIPP-Q) on a permanent basis (**PD** 08 Jul) was a "bad decision".

AMAQ President, Dr Maria Boulton, said the Minister's decision to give the green light for pharmacists to provide the service on an ongoing basis was not supported of medical groups in the state, and suggested that Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) "opposes this plan".

Boulton added that "there are

good reasons why doctors prescribe and pharmacists dispense".

"It ensures that antibiotics and other medications are only given when absolutely necessary, without any financial incentive," she said.

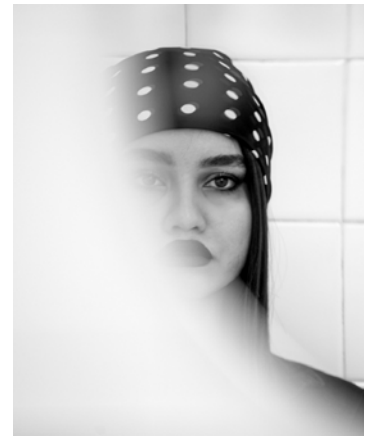
However, PSA Queensland Branch President, Shane MacDonald, confirmed the organisation backed the decision, and called on medical groups to support measures that help patient, rather than focusing on turf wars.

"Pharmacists are registered health professionals with the same ethical and moral obligations as doctors," he said.

"We have a health system that is approaching breaking point.

"The health profession needs to work together to support patients as their health needs become more complex.

"This includes reducing



duplication and empowering patients with self-care.

"Measures like pharmacist vaccination and the treatment of uncomplicated UTI help free up precious doctor's time for complex chronic disease management and more complex presentations."

### Delays slow Philips' CPAP repair efforts

**CPAP** device manufacturer, Philips, is working with the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) to minimise delays in correcting defective products following a recall.

The recall was prompted by safety concerns relating to defective sound abatement foam in Philips branded CPAP, Bi-Level CPAP devices and mechanical ventilators (**PD** 12 Jul 2021).

The TGA reported that more than 60% of affected devices that have been registered with the Philips repair/replace program in Australia, have been corrected.

"There have been some delays to devices being corrected," the TGA said.

"This is due to a variety of reasons, some of which are beyond Philips' control.

"We are working with Philips to minimise these delays where possible.

"Despite the delays, Australian patients are receiving their corrected devices ahead of many global markets."

The TGA issued infringement notices totalling \$133,200 to Philips last month in relation to the defect (**PD** 03 Jun).

### TGA approves Jazz's Vyxeos

**THE** Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has approved Jazz Pharmaceuticals' Vyxeos (44mg daunorubicin/100mg cytarabine) as a treatment for adults with newly diagnosed, therapy-related acute myeloid leukaemia (t-AML) or AML with myelodysplasia-related changes (AML-MRC).

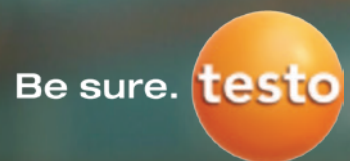
Vyxeos is a dual-drug liposomal formulation that delivers a fixed synergistic ratio of daunorubicin and cytarabine.



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## PDL confirms Galbraith appointment

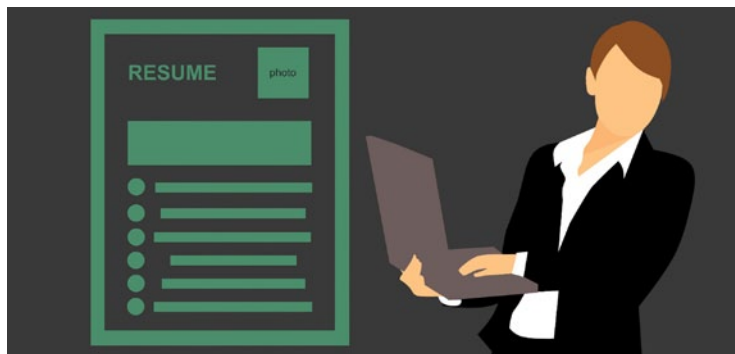
**AUSTRALIAN** Pharmacy Council (APC) Director, Amanda Galbraith, has been named as Pharmaceutical Defence Limited's (PDL's) new NSW and ACT Director.

Galbraith's appointment to the PDL Board follows the retirement of Curtis Ruhnau, last month, after more than eight years in the role.

PDL Chair, Paul Naismith, said that Galbraith would bring leadership, stakeholder engagement, finance and risk experience to the role.

"There was a great deal of interest in the position, and following an extensive selection process... we are delighted to welcome Amanda onto the PDL Board," he said.

"Amanda is well known and highly respected throughout the pharmacy profession and beyond, and brings excellent strategic



guidance, member focus and corporate governance credentials to the position.

"We feel Amanda will complement the existing skillsets around our Board table and is a great fit with the values and culture of the organisation."

In addition to her role on the APC Board, Galbraith is Chair of the

Council's Finance, Audit and Risk Monitoring (FARM) Committee, and recently appointed as the APC's representative on the Pharmacist Support Service (PSS) Management Committee.

She has also served as the Pharmacy Guild of Australia ACT Branch President, and as a National Councillor for close to nine years.



### Weekly Comment

Welcome to **Pharmacy Daily's** weekly comment feature.

This week's contributor is Peter Fairgray, TerryWhite Chemmart Arana Hills.



### Pharmacy & Men's Health

**I'M SURE** many patients (and many doctors) think that pharmacists are limited to dispensing drugs and providing advice on medication – but what I've found in community pharmacy is the opportunity to expand my skills and knowledge to provide advice and services to patients across many different areas of practice. Last year I was thrilled to join the Men's Health Down Under team – a group of community pharmacists dedicated to support men with post prostatectomy rehabilitation for erectile dysfunction.

Now you might think, shouldn't this be an area best discussed with a specialist or a GP? In a lot of cases, this would be great, but what we've found is that we can help men find the specific products they need and help them (and their partners!) feel comfortable in using them. By upskilling in this specialist area of practice, I have been able to maximise outcomes for patients, remove the embarrassment and stigma and allow time and space for questions to be asked – a day in the life of Community Pharmacy and at TWC Arana Hills is never the same, and I'm so glad I can help men from all over Qld live a more fulfilled life.

### FIP mental health push

**PHARMACISTS** can play a significant role in the provision of mental health services, International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) Board of Pharmaceutical Practice Chair, Paul Sinclair, believes.

Announcing the launch of two publications (*Mental healthcare - A handbook for pharmacists*, and *Knowledge and skills reference guide for professional development in mental healthcare*) designed to help pharmacists to support patients with mental health issues, Sinclair said the profession was well positioned to "make a big difference to improving global health".

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