

## Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features three pages of news plus a full page from TerryWhite Chemmart.

## TWC exclusives

TERRYWHITE Chemmart (TWC) is rolling out exclusive brands to help its network partners to attract new customers.

See [page four](#) for more.

## Sigma sleeps out

SIGMA Healthcare's Chief Commercial Officer, Jeff Sells, and Guardian Pharmacy Head, Kurt O'Brien, will be roughing it tonight as part of the Vinnies CEO Sleepout.

At the time of publication the pair have raised more than \$17,000 to support homeless Australians this year - coming close to matching the \$20,000 they have raised together over the last three years.

Click [HERE](#) to donate to Sells, and [HERE](#) to support O'Brien ahead of tonight's sleep out in Port Melbourne.

# NSW Budget falls short for pharmacy

PHARMACISTS in NSW continue to be overlooked by the State Government, Pharmaceutical Society of Australia NSW Branch President, Chelsea Felkai, believes.

While welcoming the \$33 billion investment in healthcare, announced in the State Budget earlier this week, Felkai said the NSW Government had missed an opportunity to recognise the role the profession has played in delivering frontline health services throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

"The pandemic clearly showed how workforce shortages impact healthcare delivery, and pharmacy is not immune to this," she said.

"All NSW healthcare workers were on the front lines of the pandemic response, yet pharmacists have missed out on critical support from the State Government.

"Doctors, nurses and ambos are entitled to a \$3,000 cash 'thank-you' for their work during the pandemic yet there is no support for pharmacists despite being on the front line of the health response and facing similar challenges to other health services.

"Cash handouts are great, but what the NSW health sector needs is more support from the State



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Government to innovate the way we deliver healthcare.

"The health sector's response to the challenges of the pandemic has highlighted the skill and dedication of pharmacists, and has proven how much more we can contribute when supported by government."

Felkai urged the NSW Government to take steps to boost pharmacists' scope of practice, to enable them to alleviate pressure on the hospital system.

"Our pharmacists have the skills and expertise to treat non-urgent conditions like minor wounds, aches and pains... and other low urgency conditions," Felkai said.

"Between 3 and 11.5% of all emergency department services in Australia could be safely transferred

to a community pharmacist or GP. "Not only would this reduce the costs of NSW hospitals, but it would also reduce pressure on wait times for those who need urgent emergency care the most."

MEANWHILE, Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia CEO, Kristin Michaels, has welcomed the Government's commitment to boost the hospital workforce, noting the State has the lowest pharmacist-to-inpatient bed ratio in the country.

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## NPS reactivates Pharmaceeka

NATIONWIDE Pharmacy Services (NPS) has relaunched Pharmaceeka, to deliver a searchable pharmacy talent marketplace.

NPS is reactivating the platform to connect community pharmacy owners with pharmacists looking to take the next step in their careers.



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## NQPSP 'makes sense' for Qld: Guild

**ROLLING** out the North Queensland Pharmacy Scope of Practice Pilot (NQPSP) will assist the State Government to deliver on its Budget commitments to strengthen frontline health services, Pharmacy Guild of Australia Queensland Branch President, Chris Owen, believes.

Welcoming the Palaszczuk Government's \$23.6 billion health Budget, announced yesterday, Owen said the investment in frontline healthcare would deliver a "shot in the arm" for the State's health system.

"This welcome increase of \$1.16 billion in health spending on the operating budget by the Palaszczuk Government will help deliver more health services right across the state," he said.

"In particular, we applaud the commitment to hire 9,450 health workers over the next four years.

"In the last two years, the COVID-19 pandemic has seen

frontline services put under enormous strain and our frontline health workers have demonstrated over and over why they are held in such high esteem.

"This funding will certainly go a long way in alleviating some of the pressures."

Owen lauded the State Government's efforts to support health professionals to work to their full scope of practice, and its commitment to the NQPSP.

"In community pharmacy, we've seen this through the Queensland Government enabling pharmacists to be front and centre in the efforts to get Queenslanders vaccinated against COVID-19 and also with the recent rollout of influenza vaccines through community pharmacy," Owen said.

"We welcome the Palaszczuk Government's commitment to rolling the out Full Scope of Practice Trial in North Queensland as well as the release of the final independent

outcomes report into the Urinary Tract Infection Pharmacy Pilot - Queensland (UTIPP-Q), which has seen over 8,190 treatments provided for uncomplicated UTIs, at Queensland community pharmacies.

"The bottom line is this, it makes no sense for Queenslanders to have to suffer due to a lack of access to a GP or emergency department."

**MEANWHILE**, Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia (SHPA) CEO, Kristin Michaels, has described the Budget funding for additional bed capacity across Queensland hospitals as "great news".

However, she noted that "extra bed capacity must be met with additional hospital pharmacist resourcing".

"Without this expert pharmacist care, medication management services will fall short, placing Queenslanders at risk of medication-related harm," she said.

## Hough Pharma cops RAT fine

**COVID-19** rapid antigen test (RAT) sponsor, Hough Pharma Pty Ltd, has been issued infringement notices totalling \$106,560.

The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) reported that the firm failed to meet deadlines for providing information to demonstrate the safety and performance of three of its RATs.

The TGA added that its investigations have verified consumer reports that there has been a lack of customer support.

The TGA confirmed it is investigating a number of other COVID-19 RAT sponsors "for similar non-compliance".

"This compliance action serves as a reminder to companies to take their obligations seriously," the regulator said.



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**References:** 1. Moderna Data on File. 2. Spikevax Product Information, 18 February 2022.

3. <https://www.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/covid-19-vaccines/getting-your-vaccination/booster-doses#winter-dose>. Accessed 25 March 2022.

Moderna Australia Pty Ltd. Level 6, 60 Martin Place, Sydney, NSW 2000.

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### Dispensary Corner

**HIGH** pollen counts in the UK are raising concerns that many Brits are dismissing mild COVID-19 symptoms as hayfever, as a fresh wave of infection hits the nation.

The *Independent* reported that case numbers jumped by more than 40% since the Queen's Jubilee celebrations earlier this month, with one-in-45 people now infected with COVID, compared to one-in-65 prior to the festivities.

Imperial College London Public Health expert, Professor Azeem Majeed, said that the overlap of the hayfever season and the latest wave of COVID, meant it was easy for the two conditions to be mistaken for each other.

"Because of immunity, people often get milder symptoms than before, and therefore may confuse it with other illnesses," he said.

"I have had a few patients, and also some colleagues as well, who thought they just had hayfever but when they tested it transpired they actually had COVID-19.

"I think one issue is that, unlike two years ago, we've now got population immunity through vaccination or prior infection.

"[This] does tend to suppress the symptoms into things like a runny nose, a mild cough, sneezing... which would overlap quite a lot with hayfever.

"For that reason, people may therefore confuse it with hayfever."

## Coolleman Court's star man honoured

**PHARMACY** Guild of Australia 2021 Pharmacy of the Year (PotY) winner, Coolleman Court Pharmacy in Canberra, has celebrated the contribution of staff member, Daniel Lewis, this week.

The store's co-owners, Brad Butt and Brooke Veasey, alongside Guild National President, Trent Twomey, presented Lewis with a replica of the PotY trophy yesterday in recognition of his efforts.

Butt said that Lewis, who has Down Syndrome, has become an integral part of the pharmacy team as the store's "robotics expert".

"What Daniel doesn't know about the pharmacy robotics side of our operation is not worth knowing," he said.

Speaking at the Australian Pharmacy Professional Conference in Mar, Butt noted that Daniel has been working at the pharmacy for a number of years.

"He does two shifts a week and brings so much joy to not only our team, but our patients," he said.

"To any pharmacists out there... have a think about how you can possibly incorporate somebody like Dan into your team, because it is so wonderful."



Accepting the honour, Lewis said he was proud to work at the award-winning pharmacy.

"It's an important job," he said.

"Having a job makes me feel good, happy and part of a great team."

Lewis's mother, Sylvia Kaltner, said she "couldn't be prouder of him".

"I never dreamt he would have this type of employment as for many years after school he was working in what they used to call a 'sheltered workshop' and was paid not a great deal but now he is equal to everyone else and gets paid for the

work he does," she said.

Meanwhile, Twomey lauded Butt and Veasey's commitment to the principles of diversity.

"Brad and Brooke have incorporated the profession's commitment to diversity into their pharmacy in a practical, respectful and pragmatic way," he said.

**Pictured**, Federal MP for Bean, David Smith, Coolleman Court Pharmacy co-owner, Brooke Veasey, pharmacy assistant, Daniel Lewis, co-owner Brad Butt, and Guild National President, Trent Twomey.

### No instant hero

**MEN** are being warned that taking HERO Instant Energy for Males capsules poses serious risks to their health.

The Therapeutic Goods Administration is urging people who have the product, which contains undeclared quantities of tadalafil, to bring any remaining capsules to their local pharmacy for disposal.

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