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## Pharmacy's a health service, not retail

**COMMUNITY** Pharmacy should not be viewed as a retail sector, but a health service provider, Shadow Health Minister, Mark Butler (pictured), says.

Addressing pharmacy owners at the Australian Pharmacy Professional Conference (APP), on the Gold Coast yesterday, Butler stressed the need for pharmacists and other health professionals to be practicing to their full potential.

"I'm very clear in my mind - to deal with some language that is being used at the moment - that community pharmacy is not a retail service, it's a health service," he said.

"I've also been very clear right through my time back in the health portfolio, and I've been very public about this in a time of skyrocketing demand and plummeting workforce supply, it simply doesn't make sense not to have every single health professional operating as close as

possible to the top of their scope of practice.

"The precise details of that should not be arm-wrestled out by politicians - these are clinical questions that should be progressed maturely and collaboratively by all groups."

Butler also warned that the nation's healthcare workforce problems were likely to become even more challenging, as health professionals, who have been on the frontline of the COVID-19 pandemic look for alternative careers, due to burnout.

"Other countries that are ahead of us on the COVID path are living what they call 'the great retirement', where scores of exhausted health workers take early retirement or simply shift sectors to find easier jobs," he said.

"They've hung on for the first two years of the pandemic through a sense of mission, but they've



just had enough - they're spent, they're done.

"We know every indication is we're going to face that same great retirement from the health sector to some extent or another.

"Which is why we have to find ways to fully utilise the skills and training of every single one of our health professionals, and that includes pharmacists."

### Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features four pages of news including a **photo page** from APP 2022, plus a full page from **Direct Chemist Outlet**.

### COVAX ad fine

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has issued a \$13,320 infringement notice to a company named Vaxine Pty Ltd for allegedly breaching the advertising provisions of the Therapeutic Goods Act in relation to an unapproved COVID-19 vaccine.

The company was accused of using social media channels to promote the vaccine, which is subject to a clinical trial.

The fine was issued because in the TGA's view the company did not adequately address a range of concerns which had been previously communicated to Vaxine's director.

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## ACCC blocks generic pact

**THE** Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) is proposing to deny authorisation for a settlement and licence agreement relating to Revlimid (lenalidomide) and Pomalyst (pomalidomide), under which manufacturer Celgene would allow Juno and Natco to produce generic versions of the medications.

The deal had been set to allow Juno/Natco to supply the generics prior to the expiry of the relevant Celgene patents.

However the ACCC said it was not satisfied the move was in the public interest, with the extent to which it would result in PBS cost savings to the Government "uncertain".

## CWH ties up ANZ McPherson's deal

**CHEMIST** Warehouse (CWH) will enter an initial five-year strategic alliance with health, wellness and beauty brand supplier, McPherson's.

The deal will see CWH appoint McPherson's as its exclusive long-term distributor of a select portfolio of CWH-owned or controlled health and beauty brands outside of the CWH network in Australia and New Zealand, making them available to all McPherson's customers, effective from 01 Jul this year.

The deal will also see the discount giant increase the portfolio of McPherson's brands it currently ranges, to include brands such as Moosehead, Sugar Baby and Happy Flora, with CWH recognising the distributor as its preferred supplier.

Under the alliance, CWH will gain a 9.9% stake in McPherson's, with the 14.1 million shares it will receive escrowed for two years, and the stock subject to market standard stand-still arrangements, McPherson's Chair, Ari Mervis, said.

"McPherson's is delighted to welcome CWH onto our share register as a significant shareholder, and to be entering into the strategic alliance with our largest customer that is strongly aligned to our growth aspirations in the health, wellness and beauty categories," he said.

"The strong support to be provided by CWH for our core brands as well as the incremental ranging in-store and online for our other health and beauty brands is expected to accelerate our growth domestically as well as internationally through CWH's physical and e-commerce platforms."

"Further, the ability to sell the CWH-owned or controlled health and beauty brands through McPherson's distribution channels is highly complementary and synergistic to our existing capabilities."

CWH Chair, Jack Gance, said that there were natural synergies



between the two businesses, that could unlock mutual growth opportunities.

"This distribution arrangement will allow us to invest more heavily in marketing and advertising to grow the sales of these products," he said.

"McPherson's has a leading distribution network across independent pharmacy, grocery and health food stores and we believe our brands will significantly complement McPherson's existing product offering through this channel."

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## COVAX role seals win for lotY

**ALIVE** Pharmacy Warehouse Westcourt's Firouzeh (Fi) Farihi Zadeh, has been named the MIMS/Pharmacy Guild of Australia Intern of the Year winner, with her role in addressing patient's hesitancy about getting COVID-19 vaccinations (COVAX) a key factor in securing the title.

The judging panel noted that she had clearly demonstrated her passion and interest in health education for Cairns community members about the vaccines.

"I was fortunate to have the opportunity to be part of the Far North Queensland COVID-19 School Vaccination Program," she said.

"In addition to this, I also visited homeless shelters and provided vaccination services to residents, as well as providing education to them about the COVID-19 vaccine."

## College launches scholarship exchange

**YOUNG** pharmacists are being invited to apply to the Australasian College of Pharmacy to participate in a \$50,000 exchange program.

The Australian Health Minister Young Pharmacist Global Exchange Scholarship, was announced as part of the Seventh Community Pharmacy Agreement, will provide an early career pharmacist with

the opportunity to work in a community pharmacy in the UK for a year, and share their experiences at a future World Pharmacy Council conference.

The scholarship will help to facilitate the two-way exchange of skills and knowledge at a practical level of the various tasks performed by community pharmacists working to their full scope of practice.



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## CONTACT

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# APP 2022 kicks off with a bang

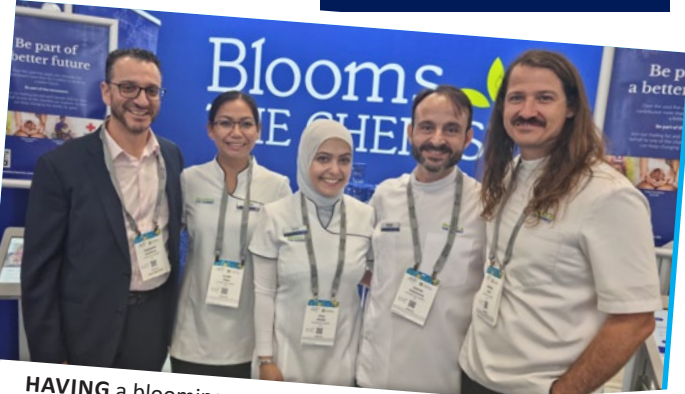
Fri 25th March 2022

LAST night saw the formal opening of the highly anticipated Australian Pharmacy Professional (APP) Conference & Trade Exhibition at the Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre, with thousands of delegates including pharmacists, suppliers and industry stakeholders taking part in the welcome celebration on the event's trade show floor. The event continues over the weekend, with more than 100 speakers taking the stand, over 220 trade exhibitors and plenty of opportunities to reconnect with the industry.

Pharmacy Daily was there last night too, with our team snapping these pics on the spot and lots more from the conference online at [facebook.com/pharmacydaily](https://facebook.com/pharmacydaily).



**THE** crowd gathers around the Guild stand for the formal opening by Pharmacy Guild of Australia National President Trent Twomey and other officials.



**HAVING** a blooming good time are the team from Blooms The Chemist: Emmanuel Vavoulas, Claire Ross, Zena Daher, Dimitri Pandoullis and Andrew Leslie.



**WILLACH'S** Tony Babic, Joshua Reuveni, Albert Juenger, Jan Pendrakowski, Simon Gerrits and Meg Brideson.



**RYAN** Tattle and Francisco Rivarola from BHC's Canview.



**THE** Viatrix line-up of Cameron Dodds, Karl Pfeffer, Dimana Khotchenko, Josephine Maltese, Amelia Court, Cindy Tran, Daniel Armstrong and Alicia Campagnolo.



**CHARLOTTE** Howard and Elisabeth Howard from POS Works.



**KIRSTIE** Bond, Lena O'Brien, Vinca Hoare and Kay Bellingham from Herbs of Gold.



**THE** Raven's Recruitment team: Rebecca Kirton, Sheryll Dobson, Marika Wark and Leanne Virtue.



**POWERHOUSE** Pharmacy Brands' Camille Deutrom, Leanne Skarpona, Tanya Gilbert, Helen Sykes, Helen Gozalez and Terry Schmidt.



**RIGHT**, said the Fred team of David Kerr, Jason Cooney, Darren Stephens, Leah Ford, Byron Mitchell, Markus Windhofer, David Freemantle, James Hector and Reg Cowie.



## Dispensary Corner

**SOMETIMES** the treatment is worse than the disease - as unfortunately allegedly experienced by a man hoping to cure his son using a Traditional Chinese Medicine remedy involving so-called snake wine.

Chinese state media reported that the fellow from China's Heilongjiang province bought three containers of the elixir, an alcoholic beverage which has a snake inside the bottle, hoping it could help the chronic ailment.

Rather than using them straight away, he left the bottles marinating for a year to boost their "medicinal properties".

Despite that, when he opened them he was shocked to find the snakes inside had been simply hibernating and weren't actually dead - with the report claiming all three came back to life, with one giving him a venomous bite which he survived after being rushed to hospital.

However experts have argued the story could not possibly be true, with a snake's survival after a year of immersion in liquid "biologically impossible".

## Build on current services

**COMMUNITY** pharmacists are being urged to make the most of the services they are currently funded to provide if they are to secure an expanded scope of practice.

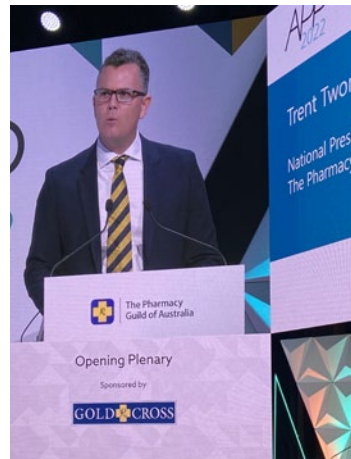
Speaking at the Australian Pharmacy Professional Conference (APP) yesterday, Pharmacy Guild National President, Trent Twomey (pictured), said there was a need for pharmacists to embrace services - noting the failure to fully embrace medication use reviews as a "missed opportunity".

"We've 35,000 pharmacists in Australia and we barely have 4,000 performing those paid services, this is after 25 years," he said.

"We can and we must use all services available, like vaccinations, continued dispensing, medication management reviews, home medicines reviews, and other professional services to complement the dispensing process.

"Secondly, we must build deeper and more trusting patient relationships, so that we can meet patient needs - this includes doing more and moving towards full scope of practice," he said.

Twomey also reiterated the



Guild's concerns over opioid misuse in Australia, describing the current situation as a silent crisis.

"That is why in our recent [Federal] Budget submission we again called for a national opioid replacement program, which is aimed to reduce drug-related harm for opioid dependent patients," he said.

"I said it last year, and I say it again this year, we have an opioid crisis in Australia - it's largely silent, and it's being made worse by COVID-19.

"We will continue to advocate for proper funding for an opioid treatment program nationwide."

## NMP decision welcomed

**FEDERAL** Health Minister, Greg Hunt, yesterday announced he would further extend the consultation period for the updated National Medicines Policy (NMP) until after the upcoming election.

The review (PD 08 Feb), which has been under way since Aug, is being led by an expert committee including pharmacist Lloyd Sansom.

Hunt said so far 156 written submissions had been received along with consultations with 194 representatives from 135 stakeholder organisations.

Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia CEO, Kristin Michaels, said the move would "ensure there is further consideration of the diverse and comprehensive feedback from medical, pharmacy, pharmaceutical, allied health and consumer stakeholders".

Shadow Health Minister, Mark Butler, also voiced support for the move at the Australian Pharmacy Professional Conference yesterday, noting there had been a decline in confidence in the process.

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