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## Today's issue of PD

*Pharmacy Daily* today features four pages of news plus our **Summer Spotlight** feature and a full page from **Pharmacium**.

## Make it happen

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The pharmacy design specialists can help create spaces that help to generate creative efficiencies in store, offering a combination of hands-on pharmacy operations experience with delivering hundreds of projects.

For more see **page five**.

## Summer focus

**GET** ready for summer with *Pharmacy Daily's* Summer Spotlight.

See **page six** for more.

# GPs have room to improve prescribing

**MEDICAL** groups seeking to curb the rise of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) may want to focus on opportunities for their members to improve prescribing practices, rather than criticise non-medical prescribers.

Following a warning from the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) that pharmacist prescribing pilots in Queensland and NSW were a threat to Australia's public health, Pharmacy Guild of Australia Victorian Branch President, Anthony Tassone, told *Pharmacy Daily* that AMR was a concern for all health professionals.

"AMR is a global problem that any health professional involved in the prescribing, dispensing and supplying of antibiotics must be mindful of," he said.

"The Queensland Urinary Tract Infection pharmacist prescribing pilot followed a clear protocol of antibiotic prescribing from the latest Therapeutic Guidelines and this

approach will be taken forward in any pharmacist prescribing.

"It should also be noted that the current challenges faced of antimicrobial resistance in Australia have had little influence from pharmacist prescribing as it has only occurred since mid-2020 as part of the Urinary Tract Infection Pharmacy Pilot in Queensland (UTIPP-Q).

"The final report of the UTIPP-Q stated that data collected from Australian general practitioner clinics participating in the *MedicineInsight* study revealed that 52.2% of patients with influenza and 92.4% of patients with acute bronchitis were prescribed antibiotics despite no evidence demonstrating their effectiveness.

"Point being - there are a number of opportunities for improvement in antibiotic prescribing in Australia with existing prescribers.

"Pharmacists take their role as stewards of appropriate use of medicines including antimicrobials seriously and look forward to



the opportunity to working collaboratively as part of the broader health professional team for patient benefit."

**MEANWHILE**, with the Victorian State election coming up on Sat, Tassone said the Guild has sought pre-election commitments to expand pharmacists' scope of practice from both Labor and the Coalition.

"There have been constructive conversations... and we are hopeful that whoever wins Government this Sat will be supportive of implementing measures to ensure that pharmacists can practice to their full scope," he said.

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## Blooms grows in Sydney

**BLOOMS** The Chemist is continuing its expansion with the addition of three new pharmacies in the Sydney suburbs of Crows Nest, Gladesville and Penrith.

Welcoming the stores to the Blooms network, CEO, Emmanuel Vavoulas, said the group was “delighted” to be expanding its presence in Sydney.

“Each of these new stores will ensure we continue to contribute to the ever-changing healthcare landscape, supporting and enabling our pharmacists to thrive as they serve and improve the health outcomes of their local communities,” he said.

Opening Blooms The Chemist Penrith High Street, owner and former Blooms Bankstown team member, Eman Khaled, said her experience was an example of the network’s ownership pathways delivering opportunities for pharmacists who want to become proprietors.

“My parents, who migrated to Australia from Lebanon, always motivated me to follow my dreams,” she said.

“Once I started in pharmacy it was clear this was the right career for me, and to achieve my dream of pharmacy ownership at this point in my life is exciting, with everyone at Blooms The Chemist very supportive in helping me fulfil that goal.”

Blooms The Chemist Gladesville owner, Abboud Hannaoui, said the decision to join the group was an important step for the local area.

“I have been a pharmacist in Gladesville for many years and



know firsthand the important role we play in our local community, supporting customers from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds,” he said.

“In joining Blooms The Chemist, we will further cement our role assisting our customers on a range of health matters, and bring expanded services and greater value into the pharmacy.”

Opening the Crows Nest store, local State MP, Tim James, welcomed Blooms’ investment in the pharmacy.

“We thank Blooms The Chemist for investing in an existing business and help make it even better and everything our community would want to see in a modern fantastic community pharmacy,” he said.

“The opening comes at a very exciting time, as we all know from the past experiences of COVID, just how hard community pharmacists have worked and how much you have stepped up, delivered, and made sacrifices, as well as the extraordinary contributions to our community and our country.”

## GP named Chair of Brisbane North PHN

**GP AND** “doctors’ health advocate”, Dr Jennifer Schafer, is set to succeed Dr Anita Green, as Chair of the Brisbane North Primary Health Network (PHN).

The announcement was made following the recent PHN’s Annual General Meeting (AGM), along with the re-election of board director, Mark Henley, and appointment of a new board director, Dr Jared Dart.

Brisbane North PHN CEO, Libby

Dunstan, thanked all board directors for their service this past year, adding the network was likely to continue to deliver for the community on 2023.

“With the outstanding credentials of our board directors and the strong leadership of Dr Schafer as chair, the PHN is well positioned to deliver the best possible health and community care system in our region,” she said.

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### Pay inequality

**FEMALE** pharmacists in the UK are paid less than their male colleagues, a survey from the Pharmaceutical Defence Association (PDA) reveals.

Across roles in community pharmacy and general practice, male pharmacists were paid between 1.8% to 13.2% more than women in the same roles.

The PDA noted that despite women accounting for two-thirds of pharmacists in the UK, this pay gap was exacerbated by the under representation of women in senior roles in the profession.

The survey also found that locum pharmacists from ethnic minorities were paid an average of 10% less than their white British colleagues.

## Pharmacists primed for travel role

**TRAINING** pharmacists to provide travel medicine services could contribute to the health of international travellers, researchers from Monash University and James Cook University believe.

The authors conducted a systematic review of the types and outcomes of pharmacist-managed travel health services, published in *Travel Medicine and Infectious Disease*.

“The pharmacists involved in providing the travel medicine services were qualified with additional training in the field of travel medicine and in most studies the pharmacists hold a Certificate in Travel Health (CTH) from the International Society of Travel Medicine (ISTM),” they said.

“In terms of the scope of practice, pharmacists provided the full travel medicines services

either autonomously or under a pharmacist-physician collaborative practice protocol or agreement.

“The studies reported a good level of patients’ acceptance of the pharmacist recommendations for vaccines, medications, and non-pharmacological advices.

“Consequently, given the rapid increase in international travel and the increased health risks associated with travel, pharmacists could contribute to the health of international travellers’ through pharmacy-based travel health services.

“This would provide more access to pre-travel preventive healthcare services at pharmacies.

“However, to implement these services, the pharmacies need to address any challenges in terms of pharmacists’ training requirements in travel health, logistical



considerations, and the additional resources to run the service.

“In addition, further efforts are needed to expand the legal scope of pharmacists’ practice, including prescribing rights and authority to provide full pharmacy-managed travel health services.

“This needs to be addressed by additional legislative changes to enable pharmacists to provide the vaccines, medications, and to order laboratory tests more autonomously.”

### Seqirus pushes Cationorm for dry eye

**CSL Seqirus** is rolling out a TV campaign to promote its Cationorm eye drops for the treatment of dry eye.

The advertising campaign aims to encourage patients to try the drops and “see the difference”, Seqirus Senior Brand Manager of Eyecare, Vanessa McCutcheon, said.

“Our campaign is designed to speak to the ‘real life’ experiences of consumers, and to empathise with their needs and frustrations.

“The ‘walk a mile in their shoes’

approach aligns with everything we have learnt from our market research, and aims to: engage the typical patient with dry eye; explain why Cationorm is different from other eye drops; and invite consumers to try Cationorm, and see the difference.

“The campaign will be supported by point-of-sale in pharmacy and optometry, to provide consumers with a reference to the advertising which is always on 24/7/365 days a year.”

### Theranos founder jailed for fraud

**THE** founder of US medtech firm, Theranos, Elizabeth Holmes, has been sentenced to more than 11 years behind bars for her role in defrauding investors.

The company, which had once been valued at more than US\$9 billion, collapsed in 2018 after it emerged that its miniaturised blood testing device was ineffective.

In 2013 Holmes entered a partnership with US pharmacy giant, Walgreens to offer in-store blood tests at more than 40 locations, using Theranos’s

device, which falsely claimed was capable of running multiple tests using small amounts of blood.

While Holmes was convicted on three counts of investor fraud and one charge of conspiracy, she was cleared of a further four counts of defrauding patients who paid for Theranos tests.

Holmes said she “felt deep shame for what people went through” because she failed them.

The former billionaire is expected to challenge her convictions and sentence at the 9<sup>th</sup> US Circuit Court of Appeals.

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## Dispensary Corner

**PHARMACY RUM** bins are nothing compared to the issues with surplus drugs being faced by authorities in the Netherlands, who are confronting a literal mountain of cocaine (pictured) seized from smugglers at the port of Antwerp.

Last year officials took almost 90 tonnes of the drug off the streets, which are being stored in warehouses awaiting incineration.

"The rapid destruction of confiscated goods is an ongoing challenge," according to a spokesperson for the Dutch customs department.

"Due to the technical limitation of the licensed incinerators and environmental standards, we have to use several incinerators," he said.

"We are urgently looking for additional incineration capacity," the spokesman added, noting that burning cocaine "releases substances that are very harmful to the filters of the incinerator".

"At most, we can process 1,000 to 1,500kg per session," the spokesperson told *Gazet van Antwerpen*.



## Dr fined over vaping ads

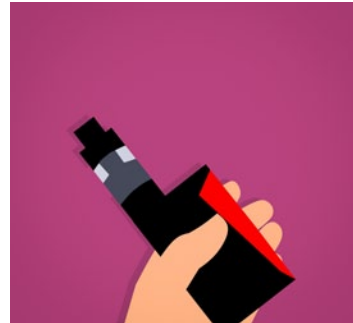
A NSW-BASED doctor has been fined \$2,664 by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) for alleged unlawful advertising of nicotine vaping products.

The TGA reported that the medical practitioner promoted a specific vaping product in social media posts.

"The advertising rules for therapeutic goods apply equally to social media posts, websites, and traditional forms of advertising such as in-store and magazines," the regulator said.

"Nicotine vaping products are prescription-only medicines and it is generally unlawful to advertise them to the public.

"The TGA has granted a legal permission which only allows pharmacies and pharmacy marketing groups to advise where a person can fill their prescription for a nicotine vaping product but also not to mention specific brands or types of products.



"Other individuals, such as medical practitioners and businesses, are not permitted to advertise these products in any way.

"The regulations around the import, manufacture, advertising and supply of nicotine vaping products balance the need to prevent adolescents and young adults from taking up nicotine vaping (and potentially cigarette smoking), while enabling current smokers to access the products for smoking cessation with appropriate medical support."

## Labelling error sparks Vicks recall

**PROCTOR** and Gamble (P&G) Australian is recalling one batch of its Vicks VapoRub Xtra Strong 100g, because it has been mislabelled as the company's standard ointment.

The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) reported that the Xtra Strong product normally has a red lid and a red label on the jar, while the standard product has a green lid with a blue/green label.

The regulator reported that the recalled batch (No 222605) has been distributed with a red lid and the standard blue/green label on the jar.

The Xtra Strong ointment

contains higher concentrations of menthol (7% w/w) and eucalyptus oil (3.84% w/w) compared with the standard VapoRub (menthol 2.82% w/w and eucalyptus oil (1.33% w/w).

The standard product's label also does not list three excipient ingredients (cedarwood oil, cardamon and ginger) that are present in the Xtra Strong formulation.

The TGA noted that patients with known sensitivities to these ingredients could be susceptible to a reaction if they rely only on the jar label.

No other batches of the product are affected by the recall.



## Weekly Comment

Welcome to *Pharmacy Daily's* weekly comment feature. This week's contributor is **Narelle Forsyth**, Regional Sales Manager, Omnicell Australia.



### Reducing the impact of staff shortages

**STAFF** shortages are impacting pharmacies nationwide and the remaining staff are having to pick up the extra work to cover the load.

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