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## Today's issue of PD

*Pharmacy Daily* today features three pages of news, plus a front cover from **TerryWhite Chemmart** and the **October MIMS Update**.

## MIMS update

**GET** the latest information about medicines with the Oct MIMS Update.

For more see **page four**.

## Ultra Nature Selancy

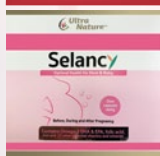
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# APC to develop prescribing standards

**ACCREDITATION** standards to equip pharmacists to prescribe autonomously are set to be developed by the Australian Pharmacy Council (APC) following a request from the Pharmacy Board of Australia.

The Board said the decision to develop accreditation standards for pharmacist prescribing programs follows and complemented its prior extensive work that explored the capacity for competent and safe prescribing by pharmacists.

“If state and territory governments determine that pharmacists can make an important and safe contribution to the delivery of healthcare to the public by prescribing a wider range of medicines autonomously, and if pharmacists are authorised to do so, accreditation standards for pharmacist prescribing education programs would be an important resource to ensure that pharmacists complete an accredited and approved education program, and are competent to prescribe,” the Board said.

“The Board has decided to develop accreditation standards now, for completion by Dec 2023, so that they can inform

future development of models of autonomous prescribing by pharmacists and the education programs that pharmacists would need to complete.”

The Board’s decision to authorise the APC to develop accreditation standards has been welcomed by pharmacy bodies, including the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) and the Pharmacy Guild of Australia.

A PSA spokesperson told *Pharmacy Daily* that the organisation “has always strongly advocated for pharmacists to be able to practise to the top of their scope, including pharmacist prescribing in specific circumstances”.

“The Board’s decision to develop accreditation standards for pharmacist prescribing education programs is a very positive step toward facilitating pharmacists to play a greater role in the primary healthcare of our communities,” the spokesperson said.

Guild National President, Trent Twomey, said the move was a very positive step to help improve patient access to medicines.

“The ability to autonomously prescribe must be a core task



for all pharmacists with general registration if our profession is to offer universal primary healthcare to all Australians,” he said.

“Autonomous pharmacist prescribing will improve access to treatment options for patients with conditions that can be managed by a pharmacist.

“And it is a very positive move that the Board has decided on the autonomous prescribing model which is necessary if pharmacist prescribing is to contribute to the delivery of sustainable, responsive and affordable access to medicines for patients.”

## Get biz support

**PHARMACY** owners seeking to grow their businesses are being invited to join the TerryWhite Chemmart (TWC) network.

The group provides franchisees with access to a range of business supports and services, including its Buy Better data intelligence platform and industry experts. See **cover page** for more.

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Click here to learn more.

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## Optus hack a cyber security reminder

**PHARMACY** owners and staff are being urged to take steps to bolster their cyber security processes in the wake of Optus's recent data breach.

Fred IT Group Service Delivery General Manager, Andrew McManus, told *Pharmacy Daily* that the breach was "a timely reminder for all pharmacies of the importance of protecting your data".

McManus said that cyber criminals were moving towards stealing data as well as encrypting local devices, meaning "basic cyber protections and a good backup are not enough".

"The risk is real and the impact can be devastating to your customers and your business," he said.

"Cyber criminals look for easy access and know many small businesses have underinvested in cyber security.

"Pharmacies are being targeted and we are seeing pharmacies hit by cyber-attacks on a consistent basis."

McManus noted that pharmacies are subject to the Notifiable Data Breach Scheme, which requires

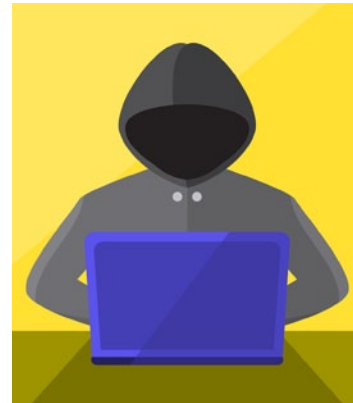
mandatory reporting of breaches to the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner, and that failure to comply could result in "significant fines".

He said that pharmacy owners should invest in staff training to ensure they understand the risks of data breaches, and how to identify phishing emails and know what ransomware is.

McManus urged pharmacy teams to implement clear IT processes regarding which PC can be used to check emails or browsing the internet, stressing such activities should not happen on computers used to record dispensing and point-of-sale data, and recommended that protocols for dealing with a breach should be established.

He added that pharmacies need to ensure they have multiple layers of protection including anti-virus software, a firewall, and 24/7 real-time monitoring and response support.

Meanwhile, a total of 36,900



Medicare numbers have been compromised by the Optus data breach - 14,900 of which have not expired.

McManus warned that these Medicare numbers could be used by people looking to fraudulently acquire medications and information.

Pharmacies impacted by the data breach can access support directly from [Optus](#) or the [Australian Cyber Security Centre](#).

## Blackmores joins PharmXchange

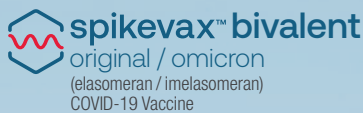
**HEALTH** supplement giant, Blackmores Group, is the latest major pharmacy supplier to sign up to Corum Group's PharmXchange digital sales and marketing platform.

Blackmores ANZ Managing Director, John Rosair, said the platform, which is integrated with the PharmX EDI gateway, would provide opportunities for the company to better serve pharmacies through the simplification of its operations.

"We are excited by the potential of this new market channel as a means of complementing our current sales strategy," he said.

"PharmXchange will drive efficiencies for both ourselves and our pharmacy customers through digitalisation of the sales and ordering process."

The move came a week after Arrotex joined the platform.



## COVID-19 HAS EVOLVED BUT SO HAS SPIKEVAX VACCINE<sup>1</sup>

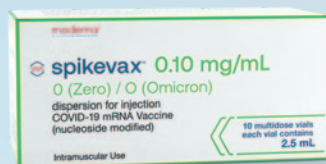
### Introducing SPIKEVAX BIVALENT

#### Next-gen COVID-19 vaccine

- Superior immune response against Omicron including the latest BA.4/5 variants<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Comparing neutralising antibody titres to SPIKEVAX original.

- Safety profile consistent with SPIKEVAX Original<sup>1</sup>
- Now available as a booster for adults ≥18 years<sup>1</sup>



For more information call the Moderna Medical Information team on **1800 344 018** or visit [www.modernatx.com.au](http://www.modernatx.com.au)



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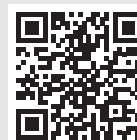
Moderna's SPIKEVAX BIVALENT Original/Omicron COVID-19 vaccine has provisional approval as a booster for active immunisation to prevent COVID-19 caused by SARS-CoV-2 in individuals 18 years of age and older.<sup>1</sup> The use of these vaccines should be in accordance with official recommendation.<sup>1</sup>

**PBS Information:** This product is not listed on the National Immunisation Program (NIP) or the PBS.

▼ This vaccine is subject to additional monitoring in Australia. This will allow quick identification of new safety information. Healthcare professionals are asked to report any suspected adverse events at [www.tga.gov.au/reporting-problems](http://www.tga.gov.au/reporting-problems).

BEFORE PRESCRIBING, PLEASE REVIEW PRODUCT INFORMATION AVAILABLE FROM [HTTPS://MODERNACOV19GLOBAL.COM/EN-AU](https://modernacovid19global.com/en-au) OR FROM MODERNA AUSTRALIA ON 1800 344 018. PRODUCT INFORMATION AVAILABLE [HERE](#).

Reference: 1. Spikevax Bivalent Product Information, August 2022.



Scan for ATAGI booster recommendation



Scan to access Dosing Guide



### Dispensary Corner



**FORMER** pharmacy owner, Mitchell Spivack, is set to spend three-and-a-half-years behind bars after being convicted for dispensing “massive amounts” of opioids for illegitimate use.

The disgraced Philadelphia-based pharmacist’s store held the unenviable record of selling more Oxycodone than any other pharmacy in the US, *Patriot News* reported.

In addition to his prison sentence Spivack will undergo two years of supervised release and has been ordered to pay US\$451,328 in restitution in addition to a US\$116,000 fine.

His Verree Pharmacy has been fined a further US\$4.1 million and has been barred from ever dispensing controlled substances.

US Attorney, Jacqueline Romero, said Spivack’s pharmacy had established a reputation as being a “no questions asked” destination for opioid users over the years.

The 63-year-old entered guilty pleas to charges of conspiracy to distribute controlled substances and healthcare fraud at a hearing in Jun.



## Pharmacists remain on SPL in 2022

**HOSPITAL** and retail pharmacists remain on the Federal Government’s 2022 Skills Priority List (SPL) released yesterday.

In its latest report the National Skills Commission noted that workforce shortages in the health professions increased by 47 percentage points in 2022.

The Commission reported that employers have struggled to fill roles in the health sector, with almost 50% of vacancies remaining unfilled due to a shortage of suitable candidates.

“While health professional occupations are at a high skill level, requiring a high level of qualification and experience, which can pose barriers to job entry, the result appears mostly driven by the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic,” the Commission said.

“The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) reported that the healthcare and social assistance industry

accounted for the largest share of people who changed jobs in the year ending Feb 2022 (12.2%).

“This may indicate that the healthcare and assistance industry is experiencing workforce instability including temporary redistribution of the Australian workforce in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as burn out of workers.

“On redeployment in response to the pandemic, an online survey with 7,846 respondents showed that during the height of the pandemic (Aug to Oct 2020), 21.5% of frontline workers increased their unpaid work hours, 16.8% were redeployed to work in a new work area, and 27.3% changed their work role.

“Regarding burn out, a survey (conducted in Aug to Oct 2020) showed that over 70% of healthcare workers experienced moderate to severe burn out.



“The impacts of redeployment and burn out could be lingering and/or ongoing as since the initial COVID-19 outbreak in Australia there have been multiple waves of outbreaks of COVID-19.”

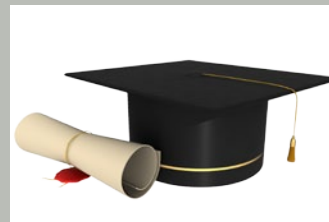
The Commission noted that job advertisements of healthcare roles hit an historic peak in Jul 2022, with demand for health professional forecast to remain moderate to high for the next five years.

## Guild urges Qlders to join pharmacy

**JOB** seekers in Brisbane and Toowoomba are being urged by the Pharmacy Guild of Australia to access the Queensland Government’s Skilling Queenslanders for Work initiative to train as pharmacy assistants.

The fully subsidised Certificate II *Fundamentals of Community Pharmacy* program, provides graduates with the skills and knowledge to meet the needs of pharmacy customers and patients.

Guild Queensland Branch President, Chris Owen, noted that previous cohorts who have completed the course have recorded an 86% employment outcome.



“We are very excited to give people a chance to participate in this program and begin a new career path in community pharmacy,” Owen said.

The Brisbane and Toowoomba courses will run from 17 Oct until 02 Dec, with participants completing a minimum of 10 days unpaid vocational placement in a local pharmacy.

## Oncology robot

**HEALTHCARE** technology provider Dedalus has detailed plans to introduce its “Pharmoduct” robotic oncology compounding system to the Australian and NZ markets, according to *Pulse IT*.

The platform assists in automating the preparation of oncology medications, with integration into specialist oncology prescribing and dispensing software.

Described as a “grade A cleanroom in a cabinet”, Pharmoduct is widely used in Europe, compounding patient-specific oncology orders into containers ready for administration.

## New Products

- Decitabine and cedazuridine (Inqovi 35/100)** is a combination of a nucleoside metabolic inhibitor and a cytidine deaminase (CDA) inhibitor. Decitabine is believed to exert its antineoplastic effects after phosphorylation and direct incorporation into DNA and inhibition of DNA methyltransferase, causing hypomethylation of DNA and cellular differentiation and/or apoptosis. In rapidly dividing cells, the cytotoxicity of decitabine may also be attributed to the formation of covalent adducts between DNA methyltransferase and decitabine incorporated into DNA. Non-proliferating cells are relatively insensitive to decitabine. Cedazuridine inhibits CDA. CDA is an enzyme that is responsible for the degradation of nucleosides, including decitabine. High levels of CDA in the gastrointestinal tract and liver rapidly degrade these nucleosides and prohibit or limit their oral bioavailability. Oral administration of cedazuridine with decitabine enhances the oral bioavailability of decitabine via inhibition of first pass metabolism of decitabine in the gut and liver by CDA. *Inqovi 35/100 is indicated for the treatment of adult patients with myelodysplastic syndromes intermediate-1, intermediate-2, and high-risk International Prognostic Scoring System groups, and patients with chronic myelomonocytic leukaemia.* Inqovi is contraindicated in pregnancy. Inqovi tablets contain decitabine 35 mg and cedazuridine 100 mg and are available in packs of 5.
- Elasomeran and imelasomeran (Spikevax Bivalent Original/Omicron)** contain messenger RNA (mRNA) encapsulated in lipid nanoparticles. The mRNA encodes for the full-length SARS-CoV-2 spike protein modified with 2 proline substitutions within the heptad repeat 1 domain (S-2P) to stabilise the spike protein into a prefusion conformation. After intramuscular injection, cells at the injection site and the draining lymph nodes take up the lipid nanoparticle, effectively delivering the mRNA sequence into cells for translation into viral spike protein. The delivered mRNA does not enter the cellular nucleus or interact with the genome, is nonreplicating, and is expressed transiently mainly by dendritic cells and subcapsular sinus macrophages. The expressed, membrane-bound spike protein of SARS-CoV-2 is then recognised by immune cells as a foreign antigen. This elicits both T-cell and B-cell responses to generate neutralising antibodies, which may contribute to protection against coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). *Spikevax Bivalent Original/Omicron has provisional approval as a booster dose for active immunization to prevent COVID-19 caused by SARS-CoV-2 in individuals 18 years of age and older in accordance with official recommendations.* Spikevax Bivalent Original/Omicron is contraindicated in individuals with known severe allergic reactions (e.g. anaphylaxis) to a previous dose of Spikevax (original). Spikevax Bivalent Original/Omicron suspension for injection contains elasomeran 25 mcg and imelasomeran 25 mcg per 0.5 mL dose and is available in packs of ten 2.5 mL or 5 mL multidose vials.
- Fluorouracil and salicylic acid (Actikerall)** is a combination of a cytostatic antimetabolite and a keratolytic and corneolytic agent. *Actikerall is indicated for the topical treatment of mild to moderate solar (actinic) keratosis on the face, forehead or bald scalp.* Actikerall is contraindicated in patients with aspirin hypersensitivity; renal insufficiency; in conjunction with potent inhibitors of the fluorouracil-degrading enzyme dihydropyrimidine dehydrogenase (DPD); with known DPD deficiency; during lactation; in existing pregnancy or by women for whom pregnancy cannot be excluded with certainty; and it must not be allowed to come into contact with the eyes or mucous membranes. Actikerall topical solution contains fluorouracil 0.5% and salicylic acid 10% and is available in a bottle containing 25 mL.
- Kit for Gallium-68 Glu-urea-Lys(ahx)-hbed-CC radiopharmaceutical preparation (Illuccix)** is a radioactive diagnostic agent after radiolabelling with Ga-68. *Illuccix is indicated for use with positron emission tomography imaging combined with computerised tomography in patients with prostate cancer who are at risk of metastasis and who are suitable for initial definitive therapy or who have suspected recurrence based on elevated serum prostate specific antigen level.* Illuccix kit for solution for injection is available in two different configurations, A and B, each intended for use with Ga-68 produced by different generators. Each kit contains 1 vial of Glu-urea-Lys(ahx)-hbed-CC 25 mcg and mannose 10 mcg lyophilized powder, 1 vial of acetate buffer solution and 1 empty sterile vacuum vial.

## New Indications

- Pembrolizumab (Keytruda)** in combination with platinum chemotherapy and paclitaxel, with or without bevacizumab, is now indicated for the treatment of patients with persistent, recurrent, or metastatic cervical cancer whose tumours express PD-L1 [Combined Positive Score (CPS)  $\geq 1$ ] as determined by a validated test.
- Ravulizumab (rch) (Ultomiris)** is now indicated for the treatment of atypical haemolytic uraemic syndrome.

## New Contraindications

- Mifepristone (Mifepristone Linepharma)** is now contraindicated in pregnancy not confirmed by an ultrasound or biological test such as urine or serum HCG.
- Mifepristone and misoprostol (MS-2 Step)** is now contraindicated in asthma uncontrolled by therapy; and in pregnancy not confirmed by an ultrasound or biological test such as urine or serum HCG.
- Sodium valproate (Epilim)** is now contraindicated in known systemic primary carnitine deficiency with uncorrected hypocarnitinaemia.

*This list is a summary of only some of the changes that have occurred over the last month. Before prescribing, always refer to the full product information.*