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Today's issue of PD

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

Dukoral in stock

CSL Seqirus has confirmed that Dukoral vaccine (single and twin pack) is now in stock in all states as of this week.

The oral inactivated cholera vaccine was previously out of stock as cases surged, creating high demand for the vaccine in priority disease outbreak areas.

Diverse roles to tackle health needs

EXCLUSIVE

AUSTRALIA needs more pharmacists than ever, in the face of an ageing population and rising healthcare demands, according to the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA).

Speaking to *Pharmacy Daily*, PSA National President Fei Sim (pictured) emphasised the urgent need for innovative care models to tackle Australia's increasing healthcare challenges.

"Projections indicate that by 2026, over 22% of Australians will be above 65, resulting in higher



health needs and reliance on medication," Sim said.

"To meet this demand, the healthcare system must evolve, and pharmacists have been identified as crucial to bolstering its capacity."

To address future health needs, the PSA is once again supporting the *Pharmacy Daily* and Raven's Recruitment Pharmacy Careers Summit 2024 (PCS2024) to equip the pharmacy community with vital educational and practice support.

"Regardless of their chosen path within pharmacy, professionals can look forward to numerous opportunities," Sim emphasised.

"Emerging roles are allowing innovative care for conditions like respiratory and gastrointestinal illnesses, skin conditions, as well as chronic disease management, such as medication reconciliation and management reviews."

Sim added that as the profession expands its scope, pharmacists are increasingly offering prescribing services for ailments like urinary tract infections and skin conditions, as well as providing more vaccination and injection services.

Pharmacists also play a crucial role in supporting priority groups, including rural and remote areas, and First Nations people.

Sim reiterated the profession's work helps ease pressure on emergency departments and GPs.

Hospital pharmacists also ensure the safe use of medication across a variety of settings.

Credentialed pharmacists can contribute to more complex medication management and embed themselves in areas where medications are essential, she said.

To explore the diverse and evolving roles pharmacists undertake, register to attend the PCS2024 to be held on Fri 05 Jul, where Sim will join other leaders on the Careers Summit Leaders Panel to discuss the future of pharmacy.

The PSA will also present a session, 'A Bright Future for Every Pharmacist', exploring future roles.

To register, [CLICK HERE](#). JG

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References: 1. Grieve KA, Barnes TM. Increased bioavailability of hydrocortisone dissolved in a cream base. *Australas J Dermatol*. 2015; 56(2):e30–4. 2. Van Zuren EJ, Fedorowicz Z, Christensen R, Lavrijsen APM, Arents BWM (2017) Emollients and moisturisers for eczema. *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews* 2017, Issue 2. Art. No.: CD012119. DOI: 10.1002/14651858.CD012119.pub2.

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AMA calls for action on chronic illnesses

THE Australian Medical Association (AMA) is urging coordinated action to prevent and manage chronic conditions across Australia.

In its submission to the Department of Health, the AMA called for a cross-jurisdictional funding strategy for the new 'National Strategic Framework for Chronic Conditions'.

"Almost half of all Australians live with at least one chronic disease, and one in five have two

or more," said President of the AMA, Prof Steve Robson.

"We need long-term, sustainable funding with practical solutions to improve the quality of life for those affected."

Chronic conditions like arthritis, diabetes, and mental health issues place a heavy burden on the healthcare system through preventable hospital admissions.

"Prevention is crucial, as our health is an investment, not a cost," he commented.

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Call for donations

A FINAL surge of donations is expected this week for research into some of the deadliest cancers affecting women.

The Mother's Day Classic Matched Giving Day yesterday saw major partner ME match the first \$30k in donations, with organisers hoping donations will exceed the \$2.5 million raised last year.

Ahead of the annual fun run and walk on Sun 12 May, the event expects 80,000 participants in 75 locations around the nation.

Since its launch in 1998, the event has donated \$44 million to the National Breast Cancer Foundation, helping improve the five-year survival rate for breast cancer patients from 84% to 92%.

In 2024, the event partners with the Ovarian Cancer Research Foundation to target ovarian cancer, aiming to improve the five-year survival rate from 49%.

CEO Zara Lawless expressed gratitude to all donors, saying, "every contribution funds vital research into breast and ovarian cancer".

Vic interns to immunise with new approval

INTERN pharmacists from Monash University are set to join Victoria's immunisation workforce under a new Secretary Approval by the Victorian Health Department.

With the first cohort already trained, they can now support the community pharmacy workforce.

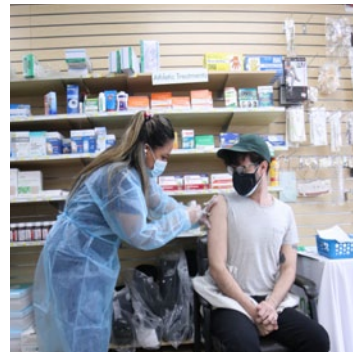
The approval has allowed pharmacy graduates completing their internship to administer vaccines across the state, under the guidance of an experienced pharmacist immuniser.

Intern pharmacists who hold provisional registration and have completed an 'immuniser program of study' are eligible to administer approved vaccines.

Monash University, the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia, and the Pharmacy Guild of Australia Victoria branch have worked closely with the Department of Health's Immunisation Program to secure the authorisation.

Also supporting the initiative is the Monash University Vaccination Training Program, developed by A/Prof Steven Walker, in partnership with the university's nurse and pharmacist immunisers.

Accredited by Health Education



Services Australia and recognised by the Victorian Chief Health Officer, the program was offered to intern pharmacists enrolled in the Intern Foundation Program at Monash's Faculty of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences (FPPS).

"Our Monash pharmacy interns will be among the first in Victoria to administer vaccines under the new Secretary Approval," said Walker.

"This is a statewide opportunity for all emerging pharmacists to join the immunisation workforce and contribute to public health."

FPPS Dean, Prof Arthur Christopoulos, noted that this

change is crucial for strengthening Victoria's healthcare workforce.

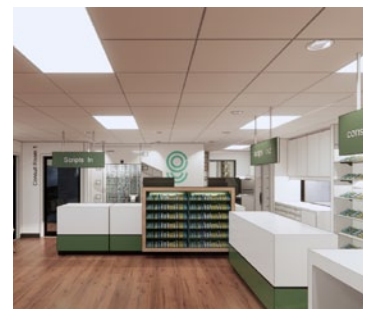
"The scale of vaccine doses has increased in recent years with the availability of COVID vaccines alongside annual flu shots," he said.

"It's important that Victoria is prepared to protect our communities, and community pharmacies are well-positioned to provide this vital service."

Victorian Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas added that the program will improve vaccine accessibility as flu season nears.

"We're ensuring more Victorians can access these life-saving vaccinations while supporting our graduate pharmacists," she said.

"Getting vaccinated against COVID-19 and the flu helps reduce pressure on hospitals and protects our loved ones," added Thomas. JG



Toppling hazards

IN A bid to improve safety, the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) has mandated safety warnings for furniture suppliers following a new Information Standard set by Assistant Treasurer Stephen Jones.

The action was taken to address the dangers of toppling furniture, which have caused 28 deaths in Australia since 2000, including 17 children under five.

Suppliers are now required to attach permanent warning labels to tall furniture and include safety information about anchoring in manuals.

They must also provide warnings in stores and online.

"A mandatory Information Standard is a critical step toward reducing the injuries and deaths involving toppling furniture," said ACCC Deputy Chair Mick Keogh.

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Dispensary Corner

IN A performance worthy of an Oscar, a Victorian health clinic orchestrated a theatrical stunt to make the Colac Area Health Urgent Care Centre appear busier during last year's visit from the state's Health Minister Mary-Anne Thomas.

A Department of Health investigation revealed that about 10 staff members and their families posed as patients to impress the visiting minister.

The ruse had a staff member faking an injury while lounging on a trolley in a corridor.

For extra flair, an ambulance arrived theatrically with a "patient" on board.

All this to create a convincing illusion of a bustling clinic.

Although no real patients were affected, the Health Department condemned the charade, calling it a serious breach of the Health Services Act and the Victorian Public Sector Code of Conduct.

Colac's interim CEO, Steve Moylan, apologised, saying, "we are sorry, and we've accepted all the recommendations made from the investigation".

Minister Thomas remained oblivious to the carefully staged drama, only learning of it from a whistleblower afterward.

Meanwhile, Liberal MP Richard Riordan defended the production as "standard procedure" while Opposition Leader John Pesutto dubbed it a "serious scandal".

As officials consider next steps, one thing is clear: this elaborate ruse is one hospital drama that won't see a sequel.

Patients not hanging up on telehealth

VIRTUAL care delivered through telephone or video conference has now embedded itself as a core component of healthcare delivery in NSW, new market reports released today have revealed.

According to the Bureau of Health Information's (BHI) *Healthcare in Focus - Virtual Care in NSW* report, virtual appointments with health professionals spiked during the pandemic before settling back into a position as an alternative to the traditional in-person consultation.

With the pandemic now over, the market penetration of virtual care has gradually declined to its current role as a back-up method.

BHI Chief Executive, Dr Diane Watson, said virtual care has been a fast-changing way of providing healthcare in recent years.

"Having expanded rapidly through



necessity during the COVID-19 pandemic, virtual care is now embedded as a core component of healthcare delivery in NSW and most patients are providing positive ratings of their experiences," explained Dr Watson.

Prior to the pandemic, virtual care was almost unused in NSW, making up less than 1% of all GP and specialist consultations subsidised by the Federal Government's Medicare Benefits Schedule.

Out of necessity rather

than organic demand, virtual consultations then peaked at 23% for GPs and 16% for specialists in 2021 before beginning to taper off.

The *Healthcare in Focus* report also explores around 20,000 instances of virtual care received by NSW hospital outpatients and GPs after discharge, showing the majority of patients experienced positive interactions and outcomes.

"The report also shows that the more patients used virtual care, the more likely they were to rate their overall virtual care highly; to say they would use virtual care again if given the choice; and to say the care and treatment they received through virtual care helped them."

The data showed urban patients were higher users of virtual care, but rural patients said they would use it again if given the option. *ML*

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- Peter Fairgray, TWC 2023 Pharmacist of the Year, TerryWhite Chemmart Arana Hills



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