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CSO wholesalers value for money

THE National Pharmaceutical Services Association (NPSA) has used last week's 2019 WA Pharmacy Forum to clarify the value versus the cost of Community Service Obligation (CSO) wholesalers providing Australia-wide equitable access to medicines.

The NPSA presented data (pictured) demonstrating that for a mark-up of 6.5%, CSO wholesalers have successfully provided the full range of Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) medicines anywhere in the country and generally within 24 hours.

NPSA Chairman, Mark Hooper, said that the Forum presented an important opportunity to dispel some of the myths surrounding CSO wholesaling, while helping industry, government and consumer stakeholders better understand the value of the critical and complex function they perform.



"There is still a widely held view in the industry that CSO wholesaling is simply a matter of moving boxes and that doing so costs the Government too much money," Hooper said.

"The reality is that the combined cost of wholesale margins and the CSO accounts for just 6.5% of the total PBS spend and our role in the supply chain goes far beyond a matter of just simply moving boxes.

"CSO wholesalers are responsible for upholding the Government's commitment to patients of 24-hour delivery anywhere in Australia.

"We also ensure reliable access to low volume medicines, that are often vital to a patient's health."

CSO wholesalers, in fulfilling their obligation, buy, hold, range, pick, pack and deliver all 6,200 PBS products, a service which requires significant investment in technology and infrastructure, Hooper added.

"Since 2014, NPSA members have invested more than \$500 million in the supply chain to ensure that Australia's medicines sector remains among the best in the world for productivity, efficiency and service delivery.

"We are also the critical business partner for Australian community pharmacies providing approximately \$1.7 billion in working capital, which is support without which the industry could not function."

Hooper insisted that "all industry stakeholders" need to understand the "huge value for money" CSO wholesalers bring to Government.

Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today has three pages of news plus our brand new **Father's Day spotlight** feature.

Insulin module

GUILD Learning and Development, in conjunction with Novo Nordisk, has developed an online course titled *Fiasp (insulin aspart), an ultra-fast acting insulin for the management of diabetes: A guide for pharmacists*.

The accredited course studies the role of Fiasp in managing diabetes and covers dosing, administration, clinical use and some of the key counselling points that should be provided to patients prescribed Fiasp.

Visit guild.org.au for more.

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Breastfeed best

A NEW national campaign aimed at increasing the incidence of breastfeeding was launched last week by the Federal Minister for Health, Greg Hunt.

Australian Breastfeeding Strategy: 2019 and Beyond, backed by a \$10 million investment, has been endorsed by all states and territories through the COAG Health Council.

Full details are to be found at coaghealthcouncil.gov.au.

BP referral levels

TARGET blood pressures summarised in an article in NPS Medicinewise's journal, *Australian Prescriber*, give clear guidance to pharmacists as to when to refer a patient to their local GP.

In Australia, people with high CV risk, diabetes or kidney disease with BP 140/90 or higher should be referred, while those in the general population with BP greater than 160/100 need referral for treatment - visit nps.org.au.

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Expanded role brings health & profits

WIDENING the scope of pharmacy practice fulfils the pharmacist's dual role of health professional and business manager without compromising their ability to serve patients, according to business analyst, Dr Grant Wilson (pictured), from the Edwards School of Business, University of Saskatchewan.

Writing in *The Conversation*, Wilson said Canada has had expanded pharmacy services for as many as 10 years now, and forms a useful model for Australian pharmacists and government healthcare authorities to consider.

Canadian community pharmacists with appropriate training at one extreme, in the state of Alberta, have the authority to independently initiate prescription of any Schedule 1 drug, independently adapt or manage any Schedule 1 drug, inject any drug or vaccine, as well as order and interpret lab tests.

At the other extreme, in the largest most northerly state of Nunavut, pharmacists have none of these rights, not even for substitution, dosage adjustment, minor ailments, collaborative prescribing, or even in an

emergency.

The range of options, across Canadian states in between the two extremes, has created fertile ground for researchers seeking to make comparisons and determine the impact on health outcomes for the different communities.

Wilson said that 81% of Canadian pharmacists have intentionally expanded their role and 45% have said they plan to do so as soon as legislation in their state permits.

A number of significant conclusions arose from Wilson's study.

"Entrepreneurial pharmacies were the most likely to participate in the expanded services," he wrote, and "implementation of expanded services was related to favourable patient health outcomes".

"Favourable patient health outcomes included overall quality of care, patient prescription knowledge and prescription error reduction as reported by the pharmacy owner or manager.

"This suggests the expansion of pharmacy services is working as intended and patients are benefiting from the new activities performed by pharmacists."

A third critical study finding was



that "retail pharmacies financially benefited from the implementation of expanded services".

The original paper by Wilson and his Saskatchewan co-authors is about to be published in the *Journal of Small Business & Entrepreneurship*.

See the state distribution of Canadian pharmacists' authorities at pharmacists.ca.

Medlab USA

AUSTRALIAN-LISTED medicinal cannabis company Medlab has announced an agreement reached with US-based ANC to draw on its manufacturing capabilities and more rapidly expand into the USA market.

Visit asx.com for details.

TGA on 'natural'



THE use of the word "natural" in advertising medicines is a point of contention which the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) is keen to clarify.

The TGA states a product may be promoted as "natural" when it is derived from natural sources such as a plant and has undergone only physical changes such as freeze drying, grinding, extraction or fermentation, not chemical changes.

Advertisers are urged to use the term wisely, including variations such as "all natural", "100% natural", or "naturally derived", when describing their products.

Claims around the use of this term need to be truthful, valid, accurate and substantiated, not associated with or implying safety or efficacy, the TGA says.

See details at tga.gov.au.

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Dispensary Corner

NO REGISTRATION, no-worries, is the view of some northern Californians in response to news that a fake pharmacist was dispensing prescriptions for more than decade (**PD** 02 Aug).

News that Kim Thien Le spent years passing herself off as a pharmacist were met with some disparaging comments about the profession, from readers of *The Mercury News*, one of whom said, "as long as you can count to 60, you're a licensed pharmacist," while another compared pharmacy to hairdressing: "This obsession with licensing is ridiculous," Dale Holmgren said.

"Did she do her job? Could you imagine if you had your hair cut by what turned out to be your unlicensed barber? The horror!"

"They do have ridiculous licensing requirements to be a barber."

"The only thing there are no qualifications for is to be a politician."

Primrose DeVille was more supportive of pharmacists, suggesting the barber comparison was "a little bit different than someone filling prescriptions for controlled substances".

Another reader who signed off as "frgough" said, "the take away from this story - A pharmacy license isn't really necessary to be an excellent pharmacist."

While Angela Hernandez suggested that given Le was a pharmacy technician, she must have had other help to secure work as a pharmacist.

Dementia friendly program



THE Pharmacy Guild of Australia Queensland Branch has announced the completion of specialised dementia training by staff from 165 pharmacies throughout Queensland, creating "dementia-friendly" pharmacies.

The training was delivered as part of the Queensland Government's 'Advancing Queensland: An Age-Friendly Community Grants Program'.

Guild Queensland Branch

President, Trent Twomey, encourages people living with dementia and their carers to utilise these specialist services.

"Each dementia friendly pharmacy offers highly knowledgeable staff and adjustments to their in-store environment and services, to assist people living with dementia and their carers when visiting their community pharmacy," he said.

Pictured is the team from Lucy Walker TerryWhite Chemmart.



Guild Update

Sensible change to benefit public health

CONSUMERS in Western Australia will clearly benefit from the expansion of the schedule of vaccines to be administered by community pharmacists in Western Australia.

The WA Government last week announced the range of vaccinations available to all West Australians now includes dTP, MMR and meningococcal.

These vaccines targeting measles, mumps, rubella, diphtheria, pertussis (whooping cough), tetanus and meningococcal are vital in saving lives and protecting infants, young children and adults from the spread of these potentially life-threatening diseases.

WA Guild President Andrew Ngeow said: "We acknowledge the Government for acting to protect our community by providing access to these life-saving vaccines for all West Australians no matter where they live. There are community pharmacies in 40 towns with no GP service. We look forward to a comprehensive vaccination program raising the level of protection and bringing immunisation within easier reach for all West Australians."

Win with ULTRASENSITIVE

This week Pharmacy Daily and ecostore are giving readers the chance to win a prize pack of products from ecostore's ULTRASENSITIVE home and body range, valued at over \$90.

Be in to win a shelf-ready pack of ecostore's key ULTRASENSITIVE products and supporting collateral, to offer your customers an asthma and allergy-aware solution for home and body care. Approved by Sensitive Choice for Australians with sensitivities. **CLICK HERE** for more.

To win, be the first from QLD to send the correct answer to the question to comp@pharmacydaily.com.au.

Which brand is currently the only Sensitive Choice approved body care range?

Check here tomorrow for today's winner.



FATHER'S DAY SPOTLIGHT

presents

Pharmacy Daily's Father's Day Spotlight is your guide to all the essential products to celebrate all dads.
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