



AMA 'hysterical' on TWC/BUPA deal

CLAIMS that TerryWhite Chemmart's partnership with health insurer BUPA is "inappropriate" and a threat to patient safety are "hysterical", "out of touch" and "insulting" to pharmacists the Pharmacy Guild of Australia believes.

Australian Medical Association (AMA) National President, Tony Bartone, described the deal as a crass commercialisation of primary health care, and a threat to general practice in a statement issued yesterday.

Responding to Bartone's "shrill calls", a spokesperson from the Guild said it was "predictable", but "disappointing".

Under the partnership, BUPA members who have signed up to the package will be able to receive a number of health checks, flu vaccinations and health consultations with pharmacists in TWC pharmacies.

"It is not appropriate to conduct sensitive, sometimes life-saving, health checks in busy retail environments, many of which promote dangerous, unproven alternative medicines and therapies," Bartone said.

"It is outrageous that a large



health insurer like BUPA would endeavour to undermine general practice, especially after a thorough Government review of private health insurance to ensure that policyholders received high quality and value for money for their significant investment in insurance."

Bartone urged pharmacists to not encroach on GPs' turf, saying "these activities are not within the scope of practice of a pharmacist".

"The BUPA-TerryWhite partnership is a misguided marketing exercise that is an insult to GPs, a threat to the health of patients, a blight on the health system, and the Government should outlaw it immediately," he said.

A Guild spokesperson said, "The hysterical response from the AMA President – while predictable - is disappointing and insulting to the skilled and highly-trained pharmacists in Australia's most accessible health care infrastructure – community pharmacies.

"If the AMA had its way, no pharmacist in Australia would be administering influenza vaccines – a clearly beneficial public health development which has brought Australia into line with comparable countries.

"Fortunately, most general practitioners know and respect the work of their local pharmacies, and will ignore the shrill calls from the out-of-touch AMA."



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Pharmacist Rx debate

SUBMISSIONS responding to the Pharmacy Board of Australia's discussion paper on pharmacist prescribing, show mixed views on the possible expansion of the profession's scope of practice.

The Consumer Health Forum (CHF) said it "supports a cautious approach to moving towards greater involvement of pharmacists in prescribing".

However, it added, "making pharmacists prescribers should not be the only solution to problems with access to medicines".

Former Curtin University Head of the School of Pharmacy, Professor Jeff Hughes, and Professor Emeritus Bruce Sunderland, voiced their support for pharmacist prescribing, saying "the recently established appendix M should be used to set requirements for their prescribing and provision".

Adding there was strong public support for pharmacist prescribing, while those participating in a series of prescribing vignettes



showed high levels of appropriate prescribing.

Hughes and Sunderland noted that data from the Bettering the Evaluation and Care of Health study estimated current antibiotic prescribing for acute respiratory infections occurred at rates four to nine times those recommended by therapeutic guidelines.

Submissions from the AMA, RACGP and Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists voiced concerns over pharmacist prescribing, with the AMA questioning a number of assumptions made by the Board.

Chinese see value in CWH offering

CHEMIST Warehouse is the leading Australian brand for Chinese consumers living in the nation's tier 2 cities, and those who do not have a university education, new research reveals.

Data collected by Monash University and Digital Crew, revealed the discount pharmacy group was one of the leading Australian health and beauty brands across China, according to the *Australian Brands in China Index 2019*.

However, CWH did not make the top 10 Australian Brands in China, but claimed fourth spot in the top fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) and retail brands categories, behind Dairy Farmers, Capilano Honey and Coles.

The 2019 Index showed a decline in the profile of Australian FMCG brands in China, with the report's authors noting "buying the hottest trend no longer appeals to Chinese consumers searching for an

Australian FMCG brand".

"Chinese consumers continue to look for brands in this industry that are highest in quality and most practical, but the brands must also offer value for money," the authors said.

Bio Island listed at the top Australia health brands, ahead of Caruso's Natural Health and Blackmores, with trust, quality and value key drivers in this category.

"The Chinese place less emphasis on innovativeness or trendiness in the health sector," researchers wrote.

"They want what works and what is established.

"New entrants can break into a country that is increasing its demand for health products by emphasising quality and value for money via digital media."

Chinese consumers' value focus was less stringent when it came to cosmetics, with premium brands prized by shoppers.

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Dispensary Corner

TRANSLATION across languages is not just an in-pharmacy problem it appears.

New Zealand's Bay of Islands Airport made a gross gaff when translating its "Baggage Claim" sign into te reo Māori, *Stuff.co.nz* reports.

Logic says the translation was OK: the sign reads "pēke kokoraho" - pēke means bag and kokoraho means to claim.

But as in most languages there can be double meanings; in this case the saying is colloquial for a man adjusting his family furniture, literally "[To] scoop up your private parts, a male being the owner of those private parts," Regional Economic Development Minister, Shane Jones, told *TVNZ*.

BAGGAGE CLAIM PĒKE KOKORAHŌ

A JAPANESE train network ground to a sluggish halt this month due to an unknown cause, the *BBC* reported.

Sadly for a slippery, slimy little slug, its grisly demise turned out to be the reason for the massive fail across the network of 30 trains on the Japanese island of Kyushu.

The slithering sightseer wormed its way through a tiny gap into a load disconnecter adjacent the rail track, bridging the circuit, and creating bedlam for thousands of commuters.



Healthy Harold CHP link



LIFE Education Australia's mascot, Healthy Harold, shook hands with Consumer Healthcare Products Australia (CHP) Chair, Lindsay Forrest, and CEO, Deon Schoombie (pictured), symbolising the new relationship of the two self-care organisations.

"No one in Australian history epitomises self-care like Healthy Harold," said Schoombie.

"Since 1979 he has transformed early education, placing a strong emphasis on health literacy and preventative health.

"CHP Australia will become a Life Education Australia educational content partner on 01 Jul and will provide expert advice around self-care to boost health literacy among Australian parents and teachers."

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04 - 07 Aug: Medici Capital Pharmacy Snow Business Conference 2019; being held at Mt Buller, Victoria; register your interest here: www.medici.com.au

05 - 07 Sep: Pharmacy Connect; being held at the Hilton Hotel, Sydney; for details and to register visit: www.pharmacy-connect.com.au

11 - 13 Oct: Pharmacy Assistants National Conference; being held at the Sofitel Brisbane Central; for more info and to register see: www.pharmacyassistants.com