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## Guild flu vax push

**THE** Pharmacy Guild of Australia has launched a campaign highlighting the impact of influenza, with mainstream media last night highlighting elements of the push including the importance of building "community immunity".

Guild National President George Tambassis cited data indicating there had already been 19,000 cases of flu reported this year.

"While there are people at high risk of the flu, including those aged 65 and above, the flu can in fact strike anyone, even the young, fit and healthy," he noted.

"In fact, one-in-four people who are hospitalised with the flu have no underlying medical condition."

The Guild said almost one in 10 Australian adults who are hospitalised with influenza are admitted to intensive care.

In 2017 more than 1,100 Australians lost their lives to the condition, but last year the mortality rate plummeted 90% to just over 100 fatalities related to the virus.

## Academics back S3 plans

**DOWN-SCHEDULING** prescription medications could benefit consumers, the health budget, and expand the role pharmacists play in the health system, experts believe.

The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) is currently reviewing the possibility of adding a new appendix (Appendix M) for Schedule 3 (S3) medicines, which would allow Australian pharmacists to dispense a number of commonly-prescribed molecules over-the-counter (OTC).

In an article published in *The Conversation*, academics from the University of Sydney's School of Pharmacy said regulations in other countries permitting pharmacists to dispense medicines like the contraceptive pill, sildenafil, trimethoprim and triptans, highlighted the benefits of down-scheduling the medicines.

"Research from New Zealand and Canada shows pharmacists can successfully manage the

appropriate supply of these sorts of medicines," they said.

"Despite common fears switching medicines to be available without a prescription may result in a rapid increase in use, this is not necessarily the case," they said, noting that no increase in use was found when NZ pharmacists were allowed to supply trimethoprim without a prescription.

"This additional list of medicines available without a prescription may benefit consumers and would allow pharmacists to broaden their role within the health care system.

"Pharmacists are well-positioned to provide advice on the safe and appropriate use of medicines," the report added, while consumer support was indicated in a 2018 survey, where two-thirds of respondents agreed pharmacists should be allowed to administer more vaccinations.

The TGA's public consultation on the proposed Appendix M closes on 01 Apr.

## Dementia training

**A NEW** online course designed to increase dementia knowledge among community pharmacists has been developed by Dementia Training Australia (DTA) in conjunction with five universities and Dementia Australia.

As the health professionals most commonly visited by people living with dementia and their family carers, community pharmacists are best placed to offer social support information resources, DTA said.

DTA Director and course developer Andrew Stafford said Australians estimated to visit their community pharmacy on average 14 times every year.

"With 70% of people living with dementia now living in the community, pharmacies are in a position to really make a difference to the level of support available," Stafford said.

The Dementia Friendly Pharmacy online course is accredited for CPD and is available free of charge via the DTA website: [dta.com.au](http://dta.com.au) or via the Guild site: [guilded.guild.org.au](http://guilded.guild.org.au).



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## Grattan backs pharmacy prescribing

**THE** Grattan Institute has come out in favour of “suitably prepared pharmacists” prescribing, in its submission to the Pharmacy Board of Australia.

Grattan Institute Health Program Director Stephen Duckett recommends that pharmacists skills be better utilised.

He suggests they be allowed to prescribe under three models: autonomous prescribing, prescribing under supervision, and prescribing under a structured prescribing arrangement.

Autonomous prescribing should be restricted to pharmacists employed in large hospitals, and prescribing under supervision should be restricted to hospitals and selected larger practices.

As things stand, the Institute says Australians are missing out.

People have to wait longer and travel further to see a GP for a service that their local pharmacist could just as easily have provided.

Sometimes people get sicker in the interim, which increases costs to the individual and the system.

The submission added that evidence shows that “pharmacists can safely provide repeat prescriptions to people with simple, stable conditions, and work with GPs to help patients manage chronic conditions.

“Allowing pharmacists to do so would improve the Australian health system by reducing pressure on the primary care system and improving people’s access to care.”

Visit [grattan.edu.au](http://grattan.edu.au) for the pdf.

## Fake pharmacist fined

**THE** local court of New South Wales has imposed a \$24,500 fine on David Le who had represented himself as a registered pharmacist in contravention of the National Law (PD 08 Mar), the Pharmacy Board of Australia reports.

The charges, filed by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA), alleged that Le had held himself out as a registered pharmacist between 08 Aug 2017 and 15 Aug 2018.

His license had been suspended on 07 Aug 2017 by the Pharmacy Council of New South Wales.

## Will a hug be enough?

**DISILLUSIONED** retail employee pharmacists may need a hug to boost morale, according to former pharmacist Kristine Hall.

Responding to the 2018 Community Pharmacists Employment and Remuneration Report, released by Professional Pharmacists Australia (PD 27 Mar) she said the salaries pharmacists have been taking home have forced many to rethink their career choice.

“A good number leave the industry chasing more lucrative work/less pressure,” she said in a post on LinkedIn.

She noted the report’s findings that 83% of community pharmacists would not recommend pharmacy as a career, while 35% of respondents planned to leave the profession within five years.

“Morale is low... community pharmacists are needing a hug right now and maybe some good medicine,” she concluded.

## Chemist Warehouse peace deal

**WORKERS** at Chemist Warehouse distribution centres in Vic and Qld yesterday unanimously agreed to return to work, after negotiations between the company and the National Union of Workers saw an agreement on new enterprise agreements for the facilities.

Protracted negotiations resulted in the peace deal, with the union and Chemist Warehouse issuing a joint statement saying the outcome will see “strong wage increases, greater security of employment, flexibility of working hours that will meet the needs of both

workers and the employer, and a commitment from all to continue to have a respectful and productive workplace”.

Industrial action had been taking place at the distribution centres for just over two weeks (PD 12 Mar), with Tim Kennedy from the National Union of Workers saying “at a time of serious wage stagnation, it’s great to see workers in their union collectively bargain for wage increases, secure jobs and respect at work”.

Chemist Warehouse lauded the deal, with director Damien Gance saying “we see this as a great outcome for the business and our team...our people are critical to our success, and we have been able to achieve a balance between rewarding our current team and being able to grow and offer more job opportunities,” he added.

## Flu vaccine & CVD

**ADMINISTERING** the flu vaccine to your patients may bring more health benefits than previously expected, according to a paper published in *JAMA Cardiology*.

Researchers from North America have found an association between influenza infection rates and an increase in emergency department visits for heart failure.

## Tamper-proof labels for TabTimer

**TABTIMER** Automated Pill Dispensers now come with Tamper Evident Security Labels and a medicine information card, which help pharmacies meet the Quality Care Pharmacy Program (QCPP) requirements for dose administration aids.



See details at [tabtimer.com.au](http://tabtimer.com.au).

## PBS changes webinar

**THE** Department of Health will be hosting a webinar on 05 Apr 2019 to provide industry, consumers and clinicians with additional information on Stage 1 of Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) process improvements.

The session will provide an overview of the changes that will take place, including information on the Positive Recommendation Pathways and other new processes which will apply from 01 Jul.

The webinar, procedure guidance and relevant documents can be accessed online from 08 to 22 Apr.

**CLICK HERE** to register.

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- **Pharmacist** - Mid-north Coast, NSW (Job# 200031990)  
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- **Production Pharmacist** - SE Suburb of Melbourne (Job# 200032160)  
Unique opportunity + great hourly rate + working Mon-Thurs 2pm-10pm & Fri 12-8pm.
- **Professional Care Pharmacist** - South West, WA (Job# 200032217)  
Dream job and salary + accomm, relocation and bonus. Awesome staffing ratios!

Share your career vision with us and we'll help get you there!

## Dispensary Corner

**CHEESE** is a versatile foodstuff and we all know it helps build calcium in our bones - but a US artist has come up with another way to use the dairy product.

Los Angeles-based Cosimo Cavallaro is making a statement about America's immigration issues, by building his very own border wall out of "cotija," a hard cheese from Mexico.

His intentionally absurd act also aims to - wait for it - "Make America Grate Again".



**A SUSPECTED** drug offender has made a somewhat ambitious attempt to escape Australian justice by fleeing the country on a jet ski.

The Australian Border Force confirmed that a "57-year-old UK national who was subject to an outstanding warrant for drug-related charges in Western Australia" had been apprehended on mud flats about 150km across the Torres Strait.

He had apparently been seen launching the water craft from Pundsand Bay on Cape York, with a tip-off indicating the jet ski had been loaded with additional fuel, supplies and a crossbow.

He almost made it to Papua New Guinea, with a coordinated response by Border Force, Qld Police and the Australian Federal Police catching up with him at remote Saibai Island, just a few kilometres from his destination.

## Student identity struggle

**PHARMACY** schools should implement strategies that help students integrate into the profession, researchers believe.

A meta-analysis of 22 articles found many pharmacy students struggled with "professional identity formation" (PIF), if their curriculum did not include a focus on profession integration.

"Pharmacy students find it challenging to integrate the knowledge, skills, and behaviours promoted by the curriculum with their own values," the authors said.

"While our findings agree with findings from other professions, in that both the formal and informal curriculum experiences were influencing how they saw themselves as they moved through these different contexts - for example, university to placement - pharmacy students often lacked opportunities to resolve any discrepancies," the report added.

"Without curricular interventions supporting PIF, we found that pharmacy students can form

professional identities that lack cohesion with their values and experiences of practice," the study's authors added.

They said curriculum interventions tended to be one-off programs, with evaluations of outcomes limited to existing assessment processes.

They also lacked validated measures, therefore only partly aiding in grasping the outcomes of professional identity programs.

### FDA ticks MS drug

**NOVARTIS** has received US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval for Mayzent (siponimod), the first oral drug to treat secondary progressive multiple sclerosis (MS) with active disease.

Mayzent is approved across the MS spectrum for clinically isolated syndrome (CIS), relapsing-remitting MS (RRMS) and active secondary progressive MS (SPMS).

Siponimod is not approved for marketing in Australia.

## Win with skinb5

This week **Pharmacy Daily** & **skinB5** are giving away each day their **NEW** premium products from their Australian Botanicals Range - Cleansing Mousse and Hydrating Essence valued at \$85.90.

skinB5's Australian Botanicals Cleansing Mousse uses botanical extracts sourced from the Australian landscape to provide a soothing, non-drying cleanse that is rich in potent active nutrients specially selected for acne prone skin.

For more info see [www.skinB5.com](http://www.skinB5.com).

To win, be the first person from VIC or TAS to send the correct answer to [comp@pharmacydaily.com.au](mailto:comp@pharmacydaily.com.au).

Congratulations to yesterday's winner, Anna Phan.

Name a key benefit of Australian Botanicals Cleansing Mousse?

## E-cigs slow healing

**ELECTRONIC** cigarettes have been shown to have a similarly negative impact on wound healing to that of normal tobacco cigarettes, a new study shows.

Access the published work in the Jan/Feb issue of *JAMA Facial Plastic Surgery* - [jamanetwork.com](http://jamanetwork.com).



## Events Calendar

**WELCOME** to **Pharmacy Daily's** events calendar, opportunities to earn CPE and CPD points.

If you have an upcoming event you'd like us to feature, email [info@pharmacydaily.com.au](mailto:info@pharmacydaily.com.au).

**27 Apr:** Diabetes Expo 2019; Melbourne Convention & Exhibition Centre; register here: [www.diabetes-expo.org.au](http://www.diabetes-expo.org.au)

**03 May:** Colloquium 2019; Sofitel Melbourne On Collins; for more info and to register visit: [www.colloquium2019.com.au](http://www.colloquium2019.com.au)

**04 - 05 May:** Pharmeducation Clinical Update Seminar; Crowne Plaza Coogee Beach, Sydney; for details visit: [www.pharmeducation.com.au](http://www.pharmeducation.com.au)

**05 - 13 Jun:** PSA Offshore Refresher Conference; Montreux, Switzerland and Lyon, France; registrations now open: [www.psa.org.au](http://www.psa.org.au)

**28 - 30 Jun:** ConPharm 2019; Pullman on the Park Melbourne; early bird offer here: [www.aacp.com.au](http://www.aacp.com.au)

**26 - 28 Jul:** PSA19; Hyatt Regency Sydney; early bird registrations now open: [www.psa19.com](http://www.psa19.com)