



Don't waste opportunities: Sclavos

QUEENSLAND-BASED pharmacists need to grasp the opportunity to take part in the state's pharmacist prescribing trial with both hands or risk losing out, former Pharmacy Guild of Australia National President, Kos Sclavos (pictured), has warned.

Speaking at Pharmacy Connect in Sydney on Sat morning, after a presentation highlighting evidence showing the clinical and economic benefits of pharmacists working to their full scope of practice in Canada, Sclavos encouraged pharmacy owners to take advantage of the work the Guild has done to encourage the Queensland Government to approve the trial of limited pharmacist prescribing for oral contraceptive and antibiotics for urinary tract infections (PD 18 Apr).

"To the executives of pharmacy groups, the message today clearly is to please support us in Queensland when the Guild reaches out to

you in the next few months, because you can make a massive difference," he said.

"Our biggest issue is recruitment, [but] this is a massive opportunity for pharmacy, [and] I can't stress enough, as somebody who goes to lots of meetings with the Queensland Government, we are facing fierce competition.

"For every one meeting we have, the doctors' groups have seven or eight trying to unpick the whole trial," Sclavos warned.

While Sclavos highlighted the threat posed by the medical profession seeking to undermine pharmacy, he noted the state government was receptive to the Guild's push for pharmacist prescribing.

"We are very fortunate in the Queensland senior government management team - I mean, Premier, Treasurer and inner Cabinet, is so dominated by females who actually find it offensive that



there are male doctors going along saying 'how dare you want easy access to these products,' he said.

"We need to have politicians who have the gumption to make these decision, and in Queensland they've done that."

Guild NSW Vice President, Caroline Diamantis, added that "a lot of legislation that has been drawn up by men has actually disadvantaged women...some of these things we have to deal with men have no idea".

Today's bumper PD

Pharmacy Daily today has four pages of news plus a full page from Medlab.

CHP challenge

CONSUMER Healthcare Products Australia has urged TGA assessment of the recent study raising concerns about the composition of some complementary medicines sold in Australia (PD 04 Sep).

CHP has asked that further details be provided to the TGA for verification and appropriate regulatory action.

"The authors' assertion that some products did not contain the correct active ingredients cannot be substantiated using their methodology," CHP said, adding it looked forward to the TGA taking any necessary action after examining the items using "appropriate analytical test methods".

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Enemies trying to break patient trust

MEDICAL organisations and groups lobbying for the deregulation of community pharmacy are attempting to undermine the relationship that patients have with their pharmacist, Pharmacy Guild of Australia NSW Branch President, David Heffernan (pictured), believes.

Attacks on the profession have stepped up in recent weeks, with persistent reporting that patients have been paying over the odds for medicines in *News Corp* publications and across the *Macquarie Radio* network.

Opening the Pharmacy Connect conference in Sydney on Fri, Heffernan urged pharmacists to combat the attacks on the profession that have been mounting in the lead up to the Seventh Community Pharmacy Agreement (7CPA), by continuing to deliver high levels of customer service and strengthening their



relationships with patients.

"A lot of what happens in the media is designed to attack the bond that you have with your patients," Heffernan said.

"That public trust is the most powerful, effective thing that makes the Guild powerful.

"We don't have the big clout of the big miners, big oil, big energy or big pharma.

"Where our power does come from is in the good work that you do that develops that trust with the patients."

Securing CPA deal a KPI

SIGNING off on the Seventh Community Pharmacy Agreement (7CPA) before 31 Dec is a key performance indicator (KPI) for Department of Health Secretary, Glenys Beauchamp.

Speaking at Pharmacy Connect on Fri, Beauchamp confirmed getting a tripartite agreement, with the Pharmacy Guild of Australia and the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia, completed before the end of the year was one of the benchmarks for her personal success.

Achieving that goal would see the 7CPA signed-off six months before the expiry of the 6CPA, and be a stark contrast to the last negotiations, which concluded in May 2015, just weeks before the agreement was due to start.

"In terms of the CPA, our goal is to sign by the end of 2019 - that's one of my performance indicators - so we have to get cracking on this," she said.

"We've already started and I've had one roundtable with a number of stakeholders and everyone seems to be an expert - not just the pharmacists - everyone wants to have a finger in the pie, and it is important that we canvas diverse views," Beauchamp said.

"We've got some big challenges ahead in finalising that agreement, and as Trent (Twomey - Pharmacy Guild of Australia chief negotiator)



and others know, managing different points-of-view is going to be pretty important.

"Our goal in government is to listen and develop the evidence-base in finalising that agreement."

Beauchamp told delegates that a second stakeholder roundtable meeting is scheduled for Oct.

"I'd really like to be able to look at problem solving in that [meeting], rather than looking at those areas where we can't agree," she said.

Beauchamp added that pharmacists will play an important role in the Government's 10-year national preventative health strategy, which is currently being finalised.

Guild negotiator, Trent Twomey, said he was focused on delivering the 7CPA with 25.5 million Australians in mind.

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Health pros? Patients forget pharmacy

PATIENTS often fail to list visits to their local pharmacy when asked about their recent interactions with health professionals, C|T Group Head of Research, Dr Michael Turner has advised.

Turner urged pharmacists to present themselves as health professionals at Pharmacy Connect in Sydney on Fri, after revealing data showing patients did not consider them as “health professionals” when asked to name which healthcare professionals they had encountered in the previous 12 months during a series of focus groups conducted by C|T Group on behalf of the Pharmacy Guild of Australia.

“Not one person in all the seven focus groups we did mentioned a pharmacist,” he said.

“However, once we probed them and said, ‘how about pharmacists?’ everyone put their hands up.

“This is because it’s not top

of mind for patients to think of pharmacists as the healthcare professions.

“They are the most under-appreciated health professionals operating in Australia.”

While often forgotten, pharmacist are the most visited health profession in the country, with the average Australian visiting a pharmacy twice as frequently as they do their general practitioner.

Turner noted that price of medicines was a key factor for patients when assessing their views on pharmacy, with patients who reported having no relationship or a bad one with their pharmacist likely to identify cost of medicines as a key factor in determining their view of the pharmacy.

However, those who have a good relationship with their pharmacist tended to focus on services.

Turner told delegates, “it’s very clear that voters want pharmacists



to be able to play a greater role in the community delivering health services.

“They strongly support the government spending money to help pharmacists to deliver additional services,” he said.

“There is very little opposition to the ideal of allowing pharmacists, and funding pharmacists to provide health services.”

EMA Picato probe

THE European Medicines Agency has started a review of data on skin cancer in patients using Picato (ingenol mebutate) for treating acitinic keratosis, with a view to assessing the gel’s risk-benefit balance.

Pharmacies struggling to break even

CLOSE to one-in-five pharmacies across Australia are failing to turn a profit, Pharmacy Guild of Australia National Vice President, Trent Twomey, told delegates at the Pharmacy Connect conference in Sydney last Fri.

Dismissing claims that pharmacists received a “windfall gain” from the Sixth Community Pharmacy Agreement, and that pharmacies recorded greater profit ratios than any other health network, Twomey

cited Australian Taxation Office figures which highlighted the weak financial position of many pharmacies.

“The ATO’s own data has said that 17% of those 5,700 community pharmacies [in Australia] trade at a loss,” Twomey said.

“We went to the ATO and our team looked at the profit ratios of general practices... general practices are three times more profitable than community pharmacy,” he concluded.

Bandit arrested

POLICE have arrested a man in relation to a brazen midday armed raid on a Perth pharmacy on Thu, the *Southern Gazette* reports.

The armed bandit fled the Amcal Community Pharmacy in Como on foot, only to be caught by police after a chase.

Pharmacy owner, Anglea Boyatis, praised the swift response from the local constabulary, saying the store reopened less than three hours after the incident.



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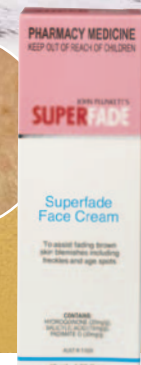
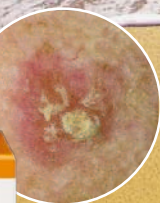
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Guild + NAPSA

THE Pharmacy Guild and the National Australian Pharmacy Students' Association have renewed their partnership for three more years, with NAPSA President Erin Cooper describing the pact as "pivotal".



Weekly Comment

Welcome to Pharmacy Daily's weekly comment feature. This week's contributor is Josh Dore, Head of Customer Service and Training, MedAdvisor.



Behind the screens at MedAdvisor (Part 2)

WHEN you create new technology that is constantly evolving, sometimes things can get a bit confusing.

As the head of customer service and training, our team of 14 have answered over 30,000 pharmacy queries over the last 3 years.

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We know that pharmacy staff are busy and it's not always convenient to jump on the phone. That's why we've released an updated Knowledge Base which includes Live Chat, a first for software in pharmacy. I'd like to invite all users to try it out **HERE**.

We thrive on feedback so please don't hesitate to contact me directly at joshd@medadvisor.com.au.



Dispensary Corner

YOU'D think this would be common sense, but the US Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has issued a formal warning to people, advising them not to kiss chickens.

The move follows an investigation which linked several salmonella cases to families who were raising poultry in their back yards.

Of about 1,000 cases reported in the USA, roughly two thirds were reported by people who had had "close contact" with chickens or ducks.

The CDC has advised poultry owners to wash their hands thoroughly after handling birds, and "not to kiss backyard poultry or snuggle them and then touch your face or mouth".

SPANISH TV coverage of a major cycling race has inadvertently brought to light a rooftop cannabis farm.

Footage from a helicopter broadcasting vision of the peloton in the La Vuelta race through Catalonia was analysed by sharp-eyed viewers, some of whom posted screen shots of the curious cultivation on social media during the competition.

Catalonian police seized a total of 40 marijuana plants in the town of Igualada, near Barcelona, after seeing the posts, which were captured just as cyclists came to the finish line of stage eight of the race.

In Spain it is actually now legal to grow cannabis on private property for personal use, but it is an offence to buy or sell it.

No arrests have been made yet.

Kiwi students claim win



BRINGING a taste of Rugby Union's Bledisloe Cup to the Pharmacy Guild of Australia National Student Business Plan Competition, the University of Auckland claimed the top prize.

The team of Hunter Amende, Peggy Lok, Jordan Anderson and Tiffany Cao won with their fictitious Know Your Genes Pharmacy which aimed to address medication mismanagement and quality use of medicine using pharmacogenomics.

Adding to the trans-Tasman domination of the comp, a second team from the Auckland-based institution took out the silver-medal position (Sunscape Pharmacy, featuring Junting Wei,

Charlotte Nakevill, Tayla Cherry and Caitlin Webby), while University of Technology Sydney's Health Key Pharmacy team of Luke Bradford, Pauline Ngo, Jasper Ho and Naila Murbeen, were the first Australian team in third-place.

Know Your Genes Pharmacy also scooped the EBOS sponsored People's Choice Award, making history as the first team to win both gongs.

Pictured, Guild National President, George Tambassis, and Guild Executive Director, Suzanne Greenwood, with the Know Your Genes Pharmacy Team from the University of Auckland, at Pharmacy Connect.



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