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Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today has three pages of news plus a full page from Terry White.

SHPA mentoring

APPLICATIONS for the Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia (SHPA) Mentoring Program is now open.

The 2020 edition of the program, supported by HESTA, will fund 20 scholarships, designed to boost participants confidence, sharpen focus, dismantle barriers and grow job satisfaction.

Scholarship applications must be submitted by 5pm on Mon 30 Mar, with outcomes to be announced in mid-Apr.

Applicants for mentoring positions close at 5pm on Thu 30 Apr.

[CLICK HERE](#) for more.

Victorian pharmacies trial RUM bin

PHARMACIES across Victoria are taking part in a pilot test of a new Return Unwanted Medicines (RUM) bin ahead of its national roll-out later this year.

The trial, which involves 50 pharmacies, aims to ensure that the bins remain as convenient as possible for pharmacists and those transporting them, a RUM Project blog noted.

"Upon successful completion of the pilot in a few weeks time, the new bin will be rolled out to all pharmacies nation-wide," a spokesperson said.

"A sufficient supply of new bins will be ready for all pharmacies to access as soon as the pilot has been successfully completed.

"The new bins will continue to be handled by wholesalers, so the process of ordering and returning RUM bins will remain unchanged.

"The new bin has been designed with increased security and



privacy in mind – for consumers, pharmacists, and those transporting the bins.

"The secure one-way entry will mean that once unwanted or expired medicines have been placed into the new bin, they will not be able to be removed again.

"This will ensure that medicine returned by the community gets securely delivered to the EPA

accredited incinerators, where they will be permanently and safely destroyed."

The trial follows a recent study by Monash University which found incorrectly disposed medicines including antidepressants can find their way into waterways and impact on the behaviour of fish, making them more susceptible to predators.

Holista ups ANZ sanitiser shipments

AUSTRALIAN Securities Exchange-listed biotech business, Holista Colltech Ltd, is more than doubling its shipments to Australia and New Zealand of NatShield sanitisers in response to rising demand from pharmacies in response to concerns over the coronavirus.

In a statement the company said it received orders for 30,000 units of the sanitiser from pharmacy groups headquartered in Sydney and Melbourne, last



week for the Australian and New Zealand markets.

Vic pharmacists warned on substitution

PHARMACISTS in Victoria are being warned they will be open to prosecution as well as disciplinary action if they make generic substitutions without authorisation.

The Victorian Department of Health and Human Services issued the reminder in response to a practice alert from pharmacist indemnity insurer, Pharmaceutical Defence Limited (PDL) on the issue (**PD 07 Feb**).

"In Victoria, pharmacists who

make generic substitutions where it has not been authorised, will have contravened the *Drugs Poisons and Controlled Substances Regulations 2017 (regulation 50 or 51)*, unless exceptional circumstances exist, and will be liable to prosecution in addition to other disciplinary action.

PDL noted that there were often "good reasons why substitution of brand should not take place", noting it can cause confusion for some patients.



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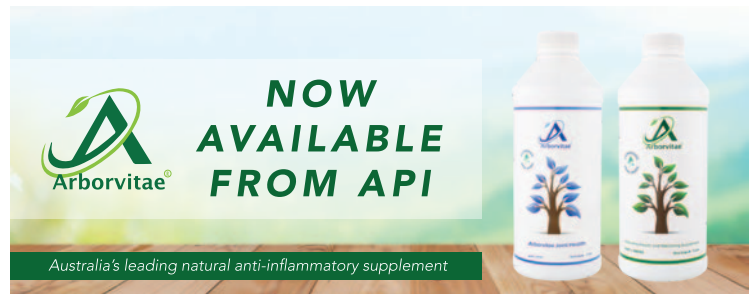
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Upjohn signs CSO contracts

PFIZER subsidiary, Upjohn Australia, is on track for a return to wholesale distribution from 24 Feb, after signing contracts with five Community Service Obligation (CSO) wholesalers.

Since announcing the decision to move away from the DHL-run Pfizer Direct platform in Dec (**PD** 18 Dec 2019), Upjohn has signed distribution deals with Symbion, Sigma Healthcare, API (Australian Pharmaceutical Industries), CH2 (Clifford Hallam Healthcare) and CHS (Central Healthcare Services).

Upjohn General Manager Australia and New Zealand, Gareth Richmond, said the repositioning of the distribution of Upjohn medicines with wholesalers is a commercial decision to ensure the business is in the best position for growth going forward.

“Upjohn’s decision will ensure community and hospital pharmacies in Australia continue to have access to our portfolio of medicines, which is our utmost priority,” he said.

While Upjohn products will only be distributed through CSO wholesalers from 24 Feb, other Pfizer originator, generic and biosimilar medications will continue to be supplied exclusively through the Pfizer Direct channel.

Pharmacy first point of contact: FIP

PHARMACISTS around the world have a critical role on healthcare’s frontline in managing patients’ concerns as fears of the coronavirus grow, the International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) believes.

FIP’s emergency taskforce released its *coronavirus 2019-nCoV Outbreak: Information and interim guidelines for pharmacists and the pharmacy workforce*, last week.

The 30-page document outlines the roles and responsibilities of pharmacists in community and hospital settings, in outbreak-affected and unaffected areas, including reliable information that covers what equipment to stock, advice they can provide patients and preventative measures, the taskforce Chair, and FIP Military and Emergency Pharmacy Section Secretary, Jane Dawson, said.

“Since pharmacies are often



the first point of contact with the health system and given that cases have already been seen in a number of countries, it is important that the whole pharmacy workforce is well informed and prepared,” she said.

The FIP recommends that pharmacies should designate a pharmacist to take charge

of procurement, storage and distribution of key medicines, and adjust the inventory to guarantee the supply for clinical practice.

The list includes antiviral medicines, antimicrobial agents, antipyretics and analgesics, corticosteroids and several other categories of medicines.

CLICK HERE for the FIP guidelines.

Education bites

GUILD Learning and Development has launched a new online training module for pharmacy assistants called, *Managing bites and stings*.

The course is focused on preventing and managing bites and stings in the pharmacy setting, providing pharmacy assistants with the knowledge to assess for serious consequences while managing any discomfort.

CLICK HERE to enrol in the course.

Blackmores seeks ASX trading halt

AUSTRALIAN Securities Exchange (ASX) listed complementary healthcare business, Blackmores, has requested a trading halt be placed on its stock pending the release of its half-year financial results.

In a statement to the ASX, Blackmores Company Secretary, Cecile Cooper, asked for the trading halt to be enforced until after the announcement is released later today, or before the commencement of trade



tomorrow morning.

“Blackmores is not aware of any reason why the trading halt should not be granted, or of any other information necessary to inform the market about the trading halt,” Cooper said.

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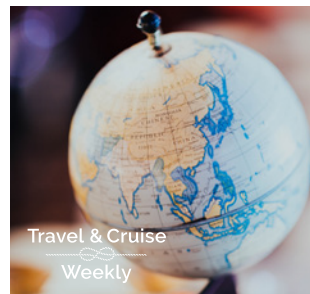
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Dispensary Corner

WITH pharmacies around the globe running low on supplies of P2 and N95 face masks as fears about the coronavirus spread, one enterprising Scottish newsagent has spotted an opportunity.

The Glasgow-based shopkeeper picked up a stock of masks and used a somewhat questionable marketing ploy of sticking a poster featuring a woman wearing a mask with the words "Don't die. Please buy" on it, outside the store.

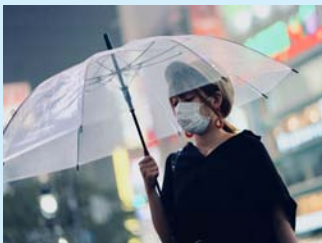
Speaking to the *Daily Record*, the store manager, said he had sold 2,050 masks at £1 each, since deciding to add the SKU to the shop's product offering.

"I've had loads of customers who want to buy masks as protection from the virus to send home to their families," he said.

"However some customers have bought them to wear here straight away.

"Other local customers have bought them as a bit of a laugh."

While the shopkeeper told the publication he had no issues with the slightly tasteless campaign, he said his daughter - who he said was a lawyer - had flagged concerns about the promotional slogan.



Oral contraceptive use

EVIDENCE suggests taking a four-day break from oral contraceptives rather than the traditional seven-day break, may improve the pill's efficacy and reduce period pain, updated information from British continuous professional development (CPD) provider, NB Medical Education, reveals.

In an updated information sheet on how to take the combined oral contraceptive pill, NB Medical Education proposed four possible recommendations; continuous use, taking the pill every day; 63/4, taking three packs of the pills back to back followed by a four-day break; 84/4, taking four successive packs of the pill followed by a four-day break; or 21/4, a single 21-day pack and a four-day break before resuming.

The information sheet noted that "modern contraception is very safe and women do not need to bleed every month to know that they are not pregnant".

The authors noted that irregular bleeding or spotting can occur when using the pill on a 365-day basis, but generally it lessens over



time, however, if bleeding persists for two days, users should take a four-day break before resuming.

The authors said the pill would remain effective for women who have missed six or fewer doses, and remain protected against pregnancy without the need for emergency contraception.

However, women who have missed seven or more are urged to see their doctor and abstain from sex for seven days after resuming the pill.

Once a patient has settled on the pill, the authors advised that women visit their GP once a year for an annual check.

Guild Update

Real time monitoring a priority

NATIONAL uniform real time monitoring of opioid prescription medicines has been a long time coming to Australia, but the Guild certainly welcomes the renewed push by Health Minister Hunt to bring it on this year (PD yesterday).

Recent mainstream media reports on the impact of opioid abuse have been very confronting, and reinforce the urgency of this work.

The Guild has long supported and called for the introduction of national real time recording of controlled drugs, a move which will benefit vulnerable patients and provide significant clinical decision-making support for doctors and pharmacists.

A national, uniform real-time monitoring system will enable pharmacists to identify and support patients at risk of dependence and will also help to counter doctor shopping.

We wholeheartedly welcome Minister Hunt's declaration that real time recording across Australia is a matter of priority.

Some States and Territories have already developed systems, but we need all jurisdictions on board and systems that talk to each other to ensure a nationally effective approach.

Win with freezeframe

This week Pharmacy Daily and freezeframe are giving readers the chance to win NEW WRINKLE BLOCK valued at \$69.

WRINKLE BLOCK blocks visible expression wrinkles up to 78% in 30 minutes without paralysing muscles. This fast-acting anti-ager delivers a near 40% wrinkle and 76% eye bag reduction in just 7 days. 2 powerful peptides simultaneously slow down expressions whilst charging skin with the energy to bounce back. Visit freeze-frame.com.au for more.

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