

## PSA Qld seeks post-COVID measures

**QUEENSLAND'S** State Government is being urged to implement legislation to protect pharmacists and other health professionals from violence and abuse on a permanent basis. In a submission to the *Inquiry into the Queensland Government's health response to COVID-19*, the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) Queensland Branch called on the Palaszczuk Government to enact reforms to break down barriers that prevent pharmacists from supporting their communities.

The submission features 11 recommendations including implementing legislation paving the way for pharmacists to dispense emergency supplies of prescription medicines as soon as a disaster is declared, rather than having to wait for separate laws to be passed through Parliament.

It also calls for the Government to make legislation protecting pharmacy workers and other

healthcare providers from violence and abuse during the COVID crisis to be made permanent.

Alongside the enactment of legislation to enable emergency dispensing, the submission called for provisions to be implemented to cease the issuing of prescriptions for medications to dispense multiple repeats at one time during a health emergency, "particularly when restrictions have been enforced for international and/or local travel", as a measure to mitigate against medicines supply shortages.

PSA Queensland Branch President, Shane MacDonald, called on the State Government to implement protocols to engage with the profession going forward.

"Pharmacists and their staff felt forgotten by the Government during this pandemic and it is disappointing that pharmacy leaders and pharmacists were not always fully consulted when policy and implementation decisions were



being made," he said.

"There are over 1200 community pharmacies in Queensland and as far as PSA is aware not a single one closed during the pandemic, remaining open to provide care, immunisations, medicines and supplies to all Queenslanders."

The PSA also called for pharmacists to be given access to National Immunisation Program (NIP) funded vaccines, to ensure equity of access to subsidised vaccinations.

Today's issue of *PD*

*Pharmacy Daily* today has two pages of news.

### Epic departure

**EPIC** Pharmacy Group owners, Cathie Reid and Stuart Giles, are passing on majority ownership baton to business partner, David Slade.

Announcing the sale in a blog, Reid noted she would also be stepping down from her role as Digital Advisor to the Icon Group Board, while she and Giles would remain "significant shareholders".

Reid added that the transaction would not include the Epic aged care pharmacies, which are "transitioning to an external party who is more aligned with their market sector".

Reid and Giles intend to focus on their family office, Arc31.

## SA pharmacies enter administration

**ADMINISTRATORS** investigating the cause of business failures at two South Australian pharmacies believe the COVID-19 pandemic may have been a key reason.

*The Advertiser* reported that the Burnside Village Pharmacy and another store in Findon, linked to pharmacist, Peter Ting, have been placed in administration with combined debts of more than \$1.7 million.

Ting was the sole director of the Burnside store from May 2014 until Jan of this year, when Yoon Kim was appointed as sole director, with Ting retaining ownership of the pharmacy.

Ting was declared bankrupt in Feb, after former Burnside Village Pharmacy owner, Jeff Ramsey, lodged a creditors' petition.

Administrator, Stuart Otway, told *The Advertiser* that negotiations were ongoing to secure a deed of company arrangement, which would allow the Burnside pharmacy to



continue to operate.

However, the store in Findon - which had been sold with a deferred settlement date - has been closed while Otway negotiates with the purchaser.

Otway said the administrators were working through the reasons for the business failures, noting that the spike in demand for pharmacy services sparked by the COVID-19 crisis followed by the implementation of strict lockdown measures in the state which forced the closure of the Findon store were likely to have contributed.

## Pharmacist makes mandatory mask call

**AUSTRALIA** should implement a mask order to mitigate against community transmission of COVID-19, Capital Chemist Group Business Manager, Andrew Topp, believes.

In a tweet, Topp called on Federal Health Minister, Greg Hunt, to mandate the wearing of face masks.

"If you can see another person and you are outside your house,

you must wear a face covering," he said.

"Easy. Effective. It is the time before things get out of control."

Topp told *Pharmacy Daily* that with mixed messaging coming out, a mask order could "give us extra protection", if people cannot "quite get social distancing right".

He added that the cost of a mask order would be significantly less than further lockdowns.



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## Dispensary Corner

**UNFORTUNATELY** it wasn't quite a light at the end of the coronavirus tunnel, but the Government of South Korea has put on a unique electronic show to keep spirits up through the COVID-19 pandemic.

Last weekend three hundred illuminated drones (pictured) assembled above the Han River which runs through the centre of Seoul, creating a "spectacular showcase of motivational and awareness messages".

The 10-minute unmanned aerial vehicle light show included a host of reminders about precautionary measures such as wearing masks, hand washing and observation of social distancing, alongside messages of gratitude for health workers.

It concluded with the drones assembling into a heart shape with the heartfelt message "Cheer up, Republic of Korea".

Unfortunately lots of locals missed the show because authorities didn't want to advertise it in advance in case large crowds gathered, in violation of distancing rules.



## Pharmacist/GP lands three-year ban

A PHARMACIST-TURNED GP will be barred from seeking registration as a pharmacist for at least three years after being found guilty of professional misconduct.

A NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal heard that Dr Hany Mahmoud Abdalla first registered as a pharmacist in 2002, before registering as a medical practitioner.

He purchased a 50% stake in the Auburn Late Night Chemist in Jun 2002, becoming the sole proprietor in 2006, despite no longer working as a pharmacist in the store, which was adjacent to the NAS Advanced Medical Centre, where he worked as a GP from 2006 and Sep 2017.

The Tribunal heard that Abdalla failed to recognise and appropriately manage a conflict, or potential conflict between his position as the owner of the pharmacy and his role as a GP at the medical centre, knowing that many of his patients would present prescriptions he had issued for dispensing and employee pharmacists may have

felt constrained from questioning prescriptions issued by their employer.

Tribunal papers noted that Abdalla submitted that it was "unclear what it is that the respondent failed to do or ought to have done" in order to appropriately manage the conflict.

However, the Tribunal noted that in a separate hearing responding to delegates of the Medical Council of NSW in Mar, he said he had not realised that pharmacists working in his pharmacy might find it difficult to report him to the Pharmaceutical Investigation Unit.

The proceeding involving the Medical Council found that Abdalla had inappropriately prescribed Schedule 8 medicines to 13 patients, for which he received a six-month suspension.

"I see now that because of the power imbalance this could have created difficulties for [the employees] and I am disappointed in myself for not realising this issue at the time," he told the Tribunal.

The Health Care Complaints



Commission alleged that Abdalla failed to discharge his obligations as a pharmacy owner, by not maintaining adequate awareness of the manner in which the pharmacy's dispensing practice was being conducted by his staff.

Abdalla sold his stake in the pharmacy last year, and has entered an undertaking not to practice as a pharmacist in the future, however the Tribunal issued a three-year ban on him seeking registration "lest the respondent change his mind".

### Tassie thieves

TASMANIAN police are investigating two break-ins at pharmacies in Launceston.

The raids at the Youngtown Pharmacy and Trevallyn Pharmacy followed similar patterns with the thieves breaking through the front doors of both stores, before grabbing quantities of medicines, and cash from the Trevallyn Pharmacy.

A black hatchback car was seen in the vicinity of both pharmacies around the time the break-ins took place.

## Win with BioSilk

Everyday this week Pharmacy Daily & BioSilk are giving away a bottle of their Silk Therapy worth RRP \$32

BioSilk Silk Therapy Original is a weightless leave-in silk replenishing and reconstructing treatment that helps repair, smooth and protect all hair types. Winner of the USA New Beauty 2018 Awards this amazing product fills voids in the hair cuticle to create smooth hair, controls frizz and provides incredible shine. Click [HERE](#) to learn more about BioSilk.

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