



## Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features three pages of news.

## Student lands CWH ban

**A LIGHT-FINGERED** student with a penchant for complementary health products has been barred from Chemist Warehouse (CWH) stores by a Victorian magistrate.

Vishal Sharma and an accomplice allegedly stole \$231.90 worth of Bio-Oil and pregnancy items on 14 May from a CWH in Mernda, having previously been charged with theft from a CWH store in Melbourne on 24 Feb.

Sharma has also been banned from being within 200 metres of either Coles or Woolworths stores over vitamin thefts.

## FWC rejects paid COVID leave call

**PHARMACY** workers covered by the Pharmacy Industry Award 2020 will not be entitled to paid pandemic leave should they be required to self-isolate due to COVID-19.

Rejecting the proposal made by health unions, the Fair Work Commission (FWC) ruled that pharmacy workers were not at "an elevated risk of infection", when compared to other retail employees.

"We do not consider that there is a necessity to establish a paid pandemic leave entitlement for any employee who has actually contracted COVID-19 as a result of infection in the workplace and has to take time off work, since the employee (even if engaged on a casual basis) will be entitled to payment under the applicable workers' compensation scheme in that circumstance," the FWC said.

In its submission arguing against the introduction of paid pandemic leave, the Pharmacy Guild of Australia said pharmacy employees

were likely to face a lower risk of infection than other retail workers due to the "hygiene requirements and the brevity of contact with particular customers".

However, FWC documents noted that TerryWhite Chemmart Armidale trainee pharmacy assistant, Letitia Bryant, had given evidence that there had been confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Armidale and some customers at the pharmacy were not practising social distancing.

The tribunal noted that, "her evidence was that if she needed to isolate or felt COVID-19 symptoms, she would feel pressured to continue working unless she tested positive for the virus".

"She said that if she had to go unpaid for two weeks because she was self-isolating, she would be unable to pay her rent, bills and groceries, which would significantly affect her household," the FWC said.

Dispensary technician, Lyndelle Potter, reported that the pharmacy



that she works in had implemented a number of measures to mitigate against the risk of infection, including floor markings, reminders to sanitise regularly and the provision of face masks for staff.

However, she noted that some customers openly coughed in the pharmacy, and expressed concerns over having no income in the event of being required to self-isolate.

## Supporting sleepless and stressed

**PHARMACISTS** in the Priceline Pharmacy group are reporting a surge in patients seeking advice on managing stress and overcoming sleeping disorders.

A survey of pharmacists within the group found close to two-thirds had seen an increase in demand for help with sleep management, while 54% said they had seen an increase in requests for help to boost mood

or deal with anxiety, as a result of the COVID-19 crisis.

The survey found people aged 30 to 40 were the most anxious.

Pharmacist, Nancy El-Miski said her colleagues were working with GPs to encourage patients to seek support from other health professionals and support services including Beyond Blue and Headspace, should they need it.

## NRHA welcomes appointment of CAHO

**THE** National Rural Health Alliance (NRHA) has welcomed the appointment of Dr Anne-Marie Boxall as the Federal Government's Chief Allied Health Officer (CAHO).

NRHA CEO Dr Gabrielle O'Kane described the announcement as good news for rural Australia, noting Boxall's experience.

"Dr Boxall is well-regarded across the sector and has an

excellent understanding of rural, regional and remote health, including having worked as a senior policy advisor at the NRHA," O'Kane said.

"Allied health is a crucial part of the health care system and particularly in rural, regional and remote Australia.

"Allied health professionals represent more than a quarter of the health workforce."

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## No need for pharmacist antibiotic Rx

QUEENSLAND'S pharmacist prescribing trial should be redirected to focus on chronic conditions rather than the provision of antimicrobial medications, a NSW hospital pharmacist believes.

Speaking to *Pharmacy Daily*, NSW Antimicrobial Stewardship Pharmacist Network Chair, Aryan Shahabi-Sirjani, warned the trial could increase antimicrobial resistance in Australia.

Shahabi-Sirjani argued that while he supported the expansion of pharmacists' scope of practice into areas where there are gaps in health services, he said the prescribing of antibiotics for urinary tract infections (UTIs) was not appropriate.

"Our concern is with antimicrobial resistance," he said.

"There isn't really a need or gap in practice where we need community pharmacists prescribing antibiotics.

"There are certainly other areas



where community pharmacists should be prescribing [such as] in chronic care cases where patients probably don't need to see the GP for a repeat script.

"But really UTIs are acute care and mistreating UTIs can have consequences on patient care, and of course antimicrobial resistance has life-long consequences on both individual patients and the community, so we don't think we

should be expanding antimicrobial prescribing to pharmacists."

Shahabi-Sirjani added that other jurisdictions where antibiotics have been available over-the-counter, have seen "disproportionate levels of resistance", noting that trimethoprim, one of the medications that has been approved for use in trial already has a 20% resistance rate within the community.

## QUM training

THE Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) has developed three online CPD modules to support pharmacists in providing optimal Quality Use of Medicines (QUM) services to residential aged care facilities.

The three modules which all cover key topics relevant to these services are Providing a QUM service, Psychotropic medicines and Antimicrobial stewardship.

To accompany the modules, a suite of resources have been developed to assist pharmacists in providing QUM services.

Also available are fact sheets for GPs, medical specialists and aged care staff on changes to HMR/RMMR rules (including referral and follow-ups), QUM Plan template and Sample QUM.

[CLICK HERE](#) for more.

## Hunter region records first e-script

NEWCASTLE City Pharmacy has dispensed the Hunter region's first electronic prescription using local software provider, Scrypt to deliver it to the patient at home.

Pharmacist, Jessica Cahill, told the *Newcastle Herald* that the electronic token-based system made the prescribing to dispense process a lot easier for the patient, prescriber and pharmacist.

"It means that you're going to have less lost scripts," she said.

"They're a lot more secure than



your traditional way of sending a script."

The roll-out of e-scripts is set to continue over the coming months with the Australian Digital Health Agency conducting trials in several Communities of Interest across the country.

## PSA announces state PSotY winners

AUSTRALIA'S top pharmacy students are set to go head to head in the final of the 2020 Mylan Pharmacy Student of the Year (PSotY) competition next weekend.

Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) National President, Dr Chris Freeman, said the PSotY allowed students to demonstrate their pharmacy knowledge and counselling skills to the profession.

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic the final will be run via

a live webinar.

The finalists are:

- Emily Stevenson - University of Technology Sydney (NSW).
- Thomas Duong - Monash University (VIC).
- Batul Al Shakarji - James Cook University (QLD).
- Emma Dunham - University of Tasmania (TAS).
- Yik Xiian Chai - University of SA (SA).
- Kurtis Gray - University of WA (WA).
- Melinda James - Wildcard (QLD).

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## Dispensary Corner

**LEGISLATION** before the Netherlands Council of State could see the concept of late-night pharmacies get a bit of a shake-up.

The bill submitted by Erik Ziengs MP, to amend the Dutch Licensing and Catering Act would allow some currently unlicensed premises to expand their business model to include the service of alcohol.

Under the proposals retailers would, under certain conditions, be able to provide shoppers with "low-alcohol" beverages.

Ziengs said the law would breathe new life into shopping streets and revitalise Dutch towns and villages.

According to Dutch international law firm, NautaDutilh, the legislation could see consumers sip champagne at the hairdresser's or a beer at the pharmacy.

While a pale ale might be tempting, we suspect pharmacists might be more inclined to create some unique cocktails for patients to enjoy while waiting for a script to be filled.



## Telehealth shows value of MHR

**THE** successful rollout of telehealth services in response to the COVID-19 pandemic highlights the benefits of the My Health Record (MHR), Doctors on Demand CEO, Kirsty Garrett, believes.

Calling for the Medicare rebates for telehealth services to be retained beyond the current crisis, Garrett said the use of the electronic health record had allowed Doctors on Demand GPs to ensure continuity of care for patients throughout the current emergency.

"For the Federal Government, patients and the healthcare industry to reap the benefits of telehealth, Medicare support needs to be retained as a tangible effort aimed at providing more accessible primary care and reducing the burden on emergency and after hour care services," she said.

"Remote and under-resourced communities will benefit the most from improved long-term access to healthcare.

"With integration via a patient's MyHealth Record, telehealth

applications can collect the full patient history in these communities to improve onsite care and collaboration between health professionals.

"There is also a misconception that somehow telehealth isn't about doctors providing the best possible care for their patients.

"In fact, telehealth providers are Australian registered GPs and thousands are now using the service every day, to complement their clinic hours and deliver services to regional areas and after-hours, where there isn't the same access to doctors in bricks and mortar clinics."

While Garrett called for the extension of telehealth services, she said the current system needed to be reformed with a push for video consults rather than telephone calls.

"The provision of a quality telehealth patient experience is much more than a simple telephone call which unfortunately represents over 90% of the telehealth Medicare claims during the COVID period.

"Virtual face-to-face telehealth is



superior to phone, when in-person consults are not readily available.

"In a geographically challenging country such as Australia, where the distances are large and healthcare services are centralised, telehealth is essential, as it is for all communities who can't gain ready access to a GP practice, including after hours.

"What is important is that it needs to be equitably accessed and governed to ensure appropriate use by providers and optimal experiences for patients."

## Vita Gummies Fish Oil recall

**PHARMACARE** in consultation with the Therapeutic Goods Administration is recalling affected batches of its 120 pastille Nature's Way Kids Smart Vita Gummies Omega 3 DHA Fish Oil supplements.

The recall relates to the presence of undeclared milk products.

The brand's 60 pastille pack size will not be subject to the recall as milk is a declared allergen on the label.

## 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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