

Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today has two pages of news.

Board rego requirements

THE Pharmacy Board of Australia has announced a series of interim modifications to the requirements for general registration during the COVID-19 crisis.

Under the temporary measures, the Board has cut the number of supervised practice hours required for registration from 1,824 to 1,575, and waived the requirements for interns to complete a minimum of 152 hours of supervised practices under an individual preceptor, and the requirement to complete a minimum of 80 hours of supervised practice during four consecutive weeks.

The Board has also announced the Jun oral exams will be conducted online, while written and oral exams are set to take place in Oct.

CLICK HERE for more.

Fast-tracking e-scripts unnecessary

MOVES to accelerate the introduction of electronic prescriptions could cause "unnecessary chaos" the Pharmacy Guild of Australia warns.

In a statement released yesterday, the Guild said the "rushed introduction" of the system as a part of the Federal Government's COVID-19 National Health Plan would be "a backward step for patient care at exactly the wrong time".

"The Guild cannot support the introduction of a measure that will impose further significant disruption at a time when community pharmacies are already under intense pressures to support their patients during COVID-19," a spokesperson said.

"The proposed fast-track introduction of the 'token' model for electronic prescriptions is the wrong move at a time when the system and pharmacy network is clearly not ready and experiencing unprecedented challenges.

"The untested system, under which prescriptions would be conveyed by 'tokens' sent to patients by text or email, presents unnecessary risks to patient care and will impose unwarranted



disruption to the administrative and clinical workflow of both prescribers and community pharmacies already having to adjust to new arrangements in support of the COVID-19 National Health Plan.

"The COVID-19 emergency has already seen significant rapid changes introduced to address the need for self-isolation and telemedicine, including prescriptions being sent as a photo image by email, fax and in some States text message, directly from prescribers to community pharmacies.

"The high number of prescriptions being dispensed through these telehealth measures demonstrates that patients are continuing to have ready access to their medicines

without the need, at this stressful time, for a token-based electronic prescription which would severely test pharmacy systems.

"From the pharmacy patient perspective, the electronic prescription token system is not suited to patients on multiple medications and will cause further disruption and confusion.

"This is why the Guild has recommended, through the Electronic Prescribing National Change and Adoption Working Group, that the alternative model known as the Active-Script List be prioritised as it best supports a patient's access to their medicines via electronic prescribing and best enables the community pharmacy to support this access."

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Dispensary Corner

HOT on the heels of the tattoo tribute to prominent Swedish epidemiologist Anders Tegnell (*PD* yesterday) comes news of that country's latest anti-coronavirus measure.

Authorities in the university town of Lund are somewhat concerned that many of the 30,000 residents may gather in its central park this weekend, as part of the traditional Walpurgis Night celebrations.

However rather than impose strict lock-down measures, they've come up with a different solution, and it involves 1,000kg of fresh chicken manure.

That's right - one metric tonne of chook poo is being dumped in the park, with a spokesperson for the local council's environment committee, Gustav Lundblad, saying the move has a dual purpose.

"Lund could very well become an epicentre for the spread of the coronavirus, so I think it was a good initiative.

"We get the opportunity to fertilise the lawns, and at the same time it will stink and so it may not be so nice to sit and drink beer in the park," he said.

Lundblad admitted there may be some slight drawbacks, including the fact that the odour might not be contained.

"I am not a fertiliser expert, but as I understand it, it is clear that it might smell a bit outside the park as well.

"These are chicken droppings after all. I cannot guarantee that the rest of the city will be odourless - but the point is to keep people out of the city park."

Show our impact: PSA

ACCREDITED pharmacists are being urged to make the most of the Federal Government's decision to fund follow-up consultations for Home Medicines Reviews (HMRs) and Residential Medication Management Reviews (RMMRs), and demonstrate the value the profession can deliver.

Speaking during the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia's latest COVID-19 webinar on Wed, Australian Association of Consultant Pharmacy (AACP) Board member, Shane Jackson, said pharmacists needed to make sure the expansion of service, the introduction of telehealth and the doubling of Quality Use of Medicines (QUM) funding, is met with clear evidence of the impact they are having on medicines safety.

"Pharmacists have been given an extraordinary opportunity to do follow-up reviews and with telehealth reviews," he said.

"What I would be saying is that we need to use them judiciously.

"We need to use them appropriately and we need to make sure they are efficacious.

"We need to make sure, especially in aged care, that our QUM and RMMR services are impactful,



and I encourage people to try and collect data as well about system improvements in their environments so we can show that what we're doing on the ground, the affect is undisputable."

Jackson stressed that pharmacists providing services to aged care need to ensure that their reviews are influencing practice.

He also encouraged community pharmacies that may have put their MedCheck services "on-hold" due to the COVID-19 pandemic, to consider offering the services over telehealth platforms for patients who might need to be "checked in on".

"When it comes to telehealth, make sure that's used judiciously and appropriately," he said.

"We may well have them on an ongoing basis, if we can show that what we do does have a really positive impact."

FIP to honour pharmacy heroes

THE International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) is calling on pharmacists to share the names of colleagues who have sacrificed their lives to support patients during the COVID-19 crisis.

Names of fallen pharmacists will be include in a memorial list which will be published on the FIP website.



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