

Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today has two pages of news and a full page from Rehydraid.

Electrolyte deal

REHYDRAID is offering a 30% discount on its range of electrolyte products.

See page three for more.

TGA issues fine

MELBOURNE-BASED

company NutriPATH Pty Ltd has landed a \$12,500 infringement notice from the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) in relation to an alleged advertising breach.

THE ad appeared on company's website last month and included a reference to COVID-19, which is a restricted representation under the Therapeutic Goods Act 1989.

Pharmacist Rx could boost MATOD

EMPOWERING pharmacists to prescribe under the Medication Assisted Treatment for Opioid Dependence (MATOD) program could improve access for patients in need, an expert believes.

Speaking during a Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) webinar on Wed, Western Victoria Primary Health Network Opioid Management Clinical Advisor and La Trobe University Pharmacy and Biomedical Sciences Lecturer, Pene Wood, said pharmacist prescribing could boost access to the program.

"One of the biggest barriers to the MATOD program is the lack of prescribers," she said.

"So it's a perfect opportunity for pharmacists to step up and say 'we're willing and able to do this', whereas there's a number of prescribers that are just not interested in participating.

"There's a big gap and I think we're perfectly placed to fill it.

"The model can look lots of



different ways - a collaborative model being initiated by a GP and then the pharmacist can continue prescribing and refer back to the person who initiated it for support, if needs be, could be one model.

"But I also think that in the future - if we ever see it - that independent prescribing could be an option as well."

Wood also voiced support for extending pharmacists' scope of practice to include administering monthly depot injection

treatments through the MATOD program.

"We're perfectly placed to be doing this for these patients," she said.

"I know in different states there's lots of different legislation about what you can give and what you can't give, but I know there's been some advocacy around pharmacists doing this.

"We provide methadone, we provide suboxone - it's just providing MATOD in a different form."

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Dispensary Corner

THERE'S been an awkward moment in a Russian hospital this week, after a nurse unwittingly wore a somewhat see-through hospital gown.

Of course Personal Protective Equipment is of vital importance in these COVID-19 impacted days, but generally it's worn over more substantial clothing than just a bikini.

A photo of the nurse from the Tula region, south of Moscow (pictured) quickly went viral after she was snapped examining a sample while an elderly man looked on.

Local media reports she received a verbal reprimand for violating the dress code, but told her supervisor that "it gets too hot in the protective equipment for clothes".



Pharmacy market strong

LOW interest rates combined with renewed positivity around the Seventh Community Pharmacy Agreement (7CPA) are fuelling optimism in the sector, Attain Business Brokers Director, Natalie Sirianni, believes.

During a video market update published on Facebook earlier this week, Sirianni said transactions were continuing to go ahead despite the COVID-19 crisis, with potential buyers up-beat about the future of community pharmacy.

"The market's been really strong, there are plenty of buyers out there, and all the transactions that are in play are still going through," she said.

"The main issues that we're dealing with are some delays, particularly with the bankers, the lawyers and the advisers all working from home have caused a bit more complexity [than usual]."

"But everything's going ahead pretty strongly and there's plenty of positivity amongst buyers, obviously two key factors being, the CPA - it's sounding like it'll be a lot more positive than we perhaps thought in Feb or Jan, and only time will tell, but hopefully we'll have some news on that soon."



"And the second item is low interest rates and access to capital is going well, so the buyers out there are definitely very positive about those two key factors in particular, and that's reflected in the market where we're seeing a lot of interest out there."

Speaking during the same update, Medici Capital Managing Director, Frank Sirianni, said the COVID crisis had created opportunities for pharmacy owners to strengthen their businesses, including reviewing the location of their pharmacies.

He also advised owners to reassess their business model and focus on "core principles" to make it "easier for patients to get their care in these [difficult] times".

Hydroxy self-Rx in decline: PSA

INSTANCES of self-prescribing of hydroxychloroquine to protect against COVID-19 are declining despite the claims of US President, Donald Trump, the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) reports.

PSA National President, Dr Chris Freeman, described President Trump's assertions that health workers have been using the anti-malarial to ward off COVID-19 as "faux claims" adding "the last time I checked, Trump did not hold a pharmacy or medical degree".

"Currently, there is no compelling evidence to support either the treatment or prevention of COVID-19 infection using hydroxychloroquine," he said.

"Now is not the time to throw the principles of evidence-based medicine out the window for popular, but poorly-founded, thoughts and treatments of early promise."

The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners has called on patients not to use the drug unless prescribed it.

ACTNow push

BRITISH pharmacy group, Pharmacist Support, has launched a campaign called ACTNow to encourage pharmacists to prioritise their mental health and well-being following the COVID-19 crisis.

The campaign will run until the end of Aug and include a range of resources to support pharmacists and pharmacy students going in the future.

CORONAVIRUS may be taking a further long-term toll on the world's cardiovascular and dietary health, with grocery stores in the USA shutting down their shared salad bars.

The potential for community transmission of COVID-19 is too high, they say, with the refrigerated spaces previously housing salad delights such as fresh lettuce, tomato and cucumber now generally filled with cans of beer.



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