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## Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today has three pages of news.

## Palliative care grants for PSA

THE Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) South Australian Branch has secured two grants under the State Government's Palliative Care 2020 Grants Program.

PSA South Australia Manager, Helen Stone, said the funding will be used for two projects designed to strengthen the role of pharmacists in the palliative care setting.

"The palliative care medication management masterclass will provide a comprehensive suite of learning modules for medicines management for end-of-life care," she said.

"The second project will establish a palliative care pharmacist in aged care program and articulate a framework for the role of the Palliative Care Pharmacist in Aged Care."

## Guild rejects GP flu vax priority call

**CALLS** for orders of influenza vaccine doses from general practice clinics to take priority over ones from community pharmacies, is being described as "tawdry turfism" by the Pharmacy Guild of Australia.

Following yesterday's announcement from Seqirus that it would distribute one million doses of its flu vaccine to private market immunisers in the coming weeks, Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) President, Dr Harry Nespolon, said "the problem was never that there was a shortage" (PD 27 May).

"The problem is with the distribution of the flu vaccine and it has been a problem for a long time," he said.

"Every year we see the same issue - the vaccine comes too slowly to GP clinics and we don't get enough for our patients."

A statement from the RACGP called for improved supply and demand modelling to ensure clinics receive appropriate allocations of the vaccine, before demanding an "adequate supply of influenza vaccines must be prioritised to general practice ahead of pharmacies to ensure access and better health outcomes for

patients".

The College also accused pharmacies of misleading advertising "resulting in patients paying for the vaccine unnecessarily, getting their vaccine too early in the year, and vulnerable patients not getting the most effective vaccine".

However, Pharmacy Guild of Australia National President, George Tambassis, rejected Nespolon and the RACGP's claims, noting "it was community pharmacists and their staff who continued to turn up and keep their doors open throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, serving patients face-to-face and providing influenza vaccination".

"The way to maximise access to vaccination for all Australians is not prioritisation of general practice, but greater access to the National Immunisation Program (NIP) through community pharmacies across Australia in all jurisdictions," he said.

Guil Victorian Branch President, Anthony Tassone, echoed Tambassis's call for greater access to NIP stock.

"Why should a patient in Wodonga on the Victorian side of the Murray River get access to an NIP vaccine through a community pharmacy but



across the river in Albury, NSW they can't?" he asked

"It does not make sense and must change.

"Why should a patient have to pay any out of pocket costs for access to an NIP vaccine through a pharmacy by way of a fee for administering the vaccination, but not through a bulk billing GP or nurse practitioner? The flu vaccination is no more magically effective when administered by one competent and suitably trained health professional over another.

"Community pharmacies simply should and must have access to the Medicare rebates for delivery of important health services like vaccinations to help reduce unnecessary out of pocket costs for patients and help further encourage take up of annual vaccination."



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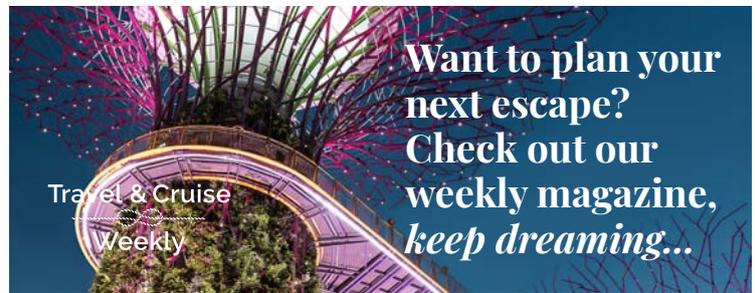


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## No 'Big Bang' with e-scripts: ADHA

**PHARMACISTS** are being reassured that there will not be a "Big Bang" moment with the accelerated introduction of electronic prescriptions.

Speaking at a webinar hosted by the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) last night, Australian Digital Health Agency (ADHA) Medicines Safety Program Director, Andrew Matthews, said the rollout plan was following a normal trial process, with end-to-end testing to be conducted in Communities of Interest (COI) over the coming months.

Matthews noted that one COI - in Anglesea, Victoria - has been processing e-scripts since 06 May, with more COI sites to be established through Jun.

"We need to coordinate a prescription exchange service and a dispense product at a GP practice and a pharmacy, and test the end-to-end process," he said.

"I'm pleased to say they are genuine legal prescriptions and it's



happening right now.

"There are a small number of electronic prescriptions being actively and legally processed and dispensed, in a very controlled environment between one GP practice and one community pharmacy.

"There'll be a small number of those COI set up throughout Jun and that's the learning we'll get from all that before any proactive rollout.

"There's no 'Big Bang' approach.

"There's a staged and steady approach that is part of the normal test process."

Under the current testing process, only "token model" electronic prescriptions are being issued, with the ADHA planning to introduce the Active Script List model to COI sites from Aug, with a progressive deployment of e-prescribing expected to be complete by Sep.

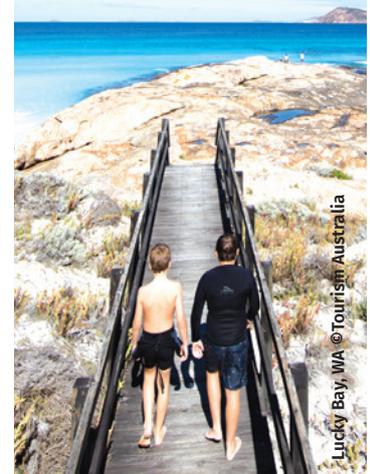
### Super Slim Green

**PATIENTS** are being urged to take any Super Slim Green Lean Body capsules they may have to their pharmacy for disposal, after tests found the product contains undeclared levels of sibutramine.

The Therapeutic Goods Administration warned sibutramine has been shown to increase the risk of major cardiac events.

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Lucky Bay, WA © Tourism Australia

### GSK and Novartis feel Voltaren pain

**GSK** and Novartis have been ordered to pay \$4.5 million in penalties over breaches of Australian Consumer Law relating to the marketing of Voltaren Osteo Gel and Voltaren Emulgel.

Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) Commissioner, Sarah Court, welcomed the Federal Court order, saying the companies' promotion of the Osteo Gel as being "specifically formulated and more effective" than the Emulgel, despite containing the same active ingredients was "unacceptable".

The ACCC noted that the two

businesses used the marketing strategy between Jan 2012 and Mar 2017.

"Voltaren Osteo Gel and Voltaren Emulgel were essentially the same gel and were equally effective in treating osteoarthritis symptoms," Court said.

"Novartis and GSK's claims were particularly concerning because they set recommended retail prices for Osteo Gel above that of Emulgel, by up to 16%, and consumers were potentially misled into paying more for an identical product believing it was more effective."

### Flu ad warning

**THE** Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) is reminding advertisers that they must not undermine public health campaigns, when promoting cold and flu treatments.

"Promoting a product as enabling someone to attend a workplace, school or other activity outside of home while experiencing cold and flu symptoms (even if temporarily controlled) conflicts with the Department of Health's advice to stay home when unwell," the TGA said in a warning issued today.

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## Dispensary Corner

**DESPERATE** times call for desperate measures. American carrier United Airlines has delivered more than 7,000 face masks to help protect front-line staff at San Francisco International Airport. Nothing unusual in that - except that the airline used recycled old uniforms to create the masks, in partnership with "upcycling" partner Looptworks. Just before COVID-19 hit the airline had rolled out new look outfits for its 28,000 technical operations, ramp service and catering operations workers, and had originally planned to turn its stock of older garments into carpet padding. However, that all changed after the Centers for Disease Control changed its recommendations to wear face masks in public where social distance is not possible. The newly created masks are sustainable, eco-friendly, washable and reusable - and also potentially a limited-edition collectors' item.

**US PRESIDENT** Donald Trump has once again displayed his medical expertise, publicly musing whether he should be taking insulin despite not actually being a diabetic. In a press announcement about a plan to cut the prices of the medication, he said "I don't use insulin...should I be? Huh? I never thought about it. "But I know a lot of people are very badly affected, right? Unbelievable". Sure is, Donald.

## 7CPA talks continue, but deal in sight

**NEGOTIATIONS** around the Seventh Community Pharmacy Agreement (7CPA) are continuing with reports suggesting a deal may be close to completion ahead of the 6CPA's 30 Jun expiry date.

Details of a potential deal outlined by pharmaceutical industry publication, *BioPharmaDispatch*, suggest the Federal Government will not seek to implement 60-day, dispensing as part of the 7CPA.

However, it reported that the Pharmacy Guild of Australia has been unable to secure the removal of the controversial "\$1 discount", which can be applied to prescriptions that fall below the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) co-payment.

A Guild spokesperson told *Pharmacy Daily* that negotiations between the Guild, Pharmaceutical Society of Australia and the Department of Health were ongoing, with the potential for a deal to be signed in the coming weeks.

"We are confident that an agreement will be reached before the end of the current Agreement," the spokesperson said.



Speaking at the Guild's Annual Parliamentary Dinner in Sep, Federal Health Minister, Greg Hunt, had pledged that the 7CPA would deliver certainty for community pharmacy and reduce fluctuations in payments (*PD* 11 Sep 2019).

"We're developing a model to set the remuneration, through negotiations and discussions, which we believe will be fair and reasonable," he said.

As part of this 'fair and reasonable' deal, Hunt said funding from the 7CPA would deliver "remuneration you can bank on".

"It's protected for us, because we know what we'll have to pay, and it's protected for you, because you'll know what you will receive, so you can see over the next five years this is the amount and this time that amount will effectively be guaranteed," he said.

This commitment appears to have been secured, with *BioPharmaDispatch* reporting that the 7CPA is set to include "an enhanced risk-share agreement under which community pharmacy will essentially be guaranteed a minimum spend under the 7CPA".

## Win With Aromababy

Everyday this week Pharmacy Daily and AROMABABY are giving away a set of their products worth RRP\$39.95

Aromababy is celebrating 25 years of caring for sensitive skin. From newborn to older children, choose from a complete range of naturally soothing products to cleanse, moisturise, protect and pamper. Offering a variety of unscented options, AROMABABY prides itself on a long history of safety and efficacy as a pharmacy specialist brand. To learn more about the products click [HERE](#).

Q: how many years has AROMABABY been caring for sensitive skin?  
To win send the correct answer to [comp@pharmacydaily.com.au](mailto:comp@pharmacydaily.com.au)

## COVID cannabis

**CANNABIS** pharmacies in Utah are offering vulnerable patients drive-thru dispensing services to protect them from potential exposure to COVID-19.

Patients can order prescriptions online in line with State guidelines, which require transactions to take place on the pharmacy property, pharmacies required to video dispensing and capture the patient's registration plate.