

Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features three pages of news, plus a full page from TerryWhite Chemmart.

Get a business boost with TWC

PHARMACY owners looking to boost their business are being urged to join TerryWhite Chemmart (TWC).

Franchisees get access to significant marketing support and market-leading trading terms.

See **page four** for more.

MDMA update

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has decided to seek further advice in relations to amending the scheduling of psilocybin and MDMA.

The review will assess the therapeutic value, risks and benefits to public health outcomes for these substances.

A final decision is due on 22 Apr.

Pharmacists prepped and ready to go

COMMUNITY pharmacists are ready, willing and able to join the national COVID-19 vaccine rollout campaign as soon as they receive approval, Pharmacy Guild of Australia National President, Trent Twomey, believes.

The Pharmacy Programs Administrator (PPA) had been expected to approve expression of interest submissions from pharmacies on 19 Mar, however, that was subsequently pushed back until 12 Apr, with final assessment activities to be undertaken in May, delaying pharmacists' involvement in the campaign until Jun at the earliest.

Speaking at a press conference yesterday, Prime Minister, Scott Morrison, rejected suggestions that the expansion of the program to include pharmacist immunisers was falling behind schedule.

"It was always mid-year," he said. "We were always working to mid-year."

"Pharmacists were not coming in until the next phase, and so I welcome their enthusiasm and willingness to want to be involved in this, and when we reach that stage where they can be involved then they'll be involved."



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Twomey told *Pharmacy Daily* that the Guild supported the national rollout strategy, with pharmacists "prepared and ready to go" when the PPA grants approval to individual stores.

"We've done all the mandatory training required for all COVID vaccine providers, including GPs and nurses," he said.

"Last year community pharmacies provided an estimated three million influenza vaccinations, and we'll do it again, and more this year."

"Some 97% of Australians live less than 3km from their local pharmacy - which makes us one of the most accessible primary healthcare providers nationally."

"We understand the Government will bring us on as part of Phase 2a, which was due to start in May, but has now been pushed back to Jun, and we remain keen to play our role in dealing with the pandemic."

MEANWHILE, community pharmacies which receive PPA approval are expected to receive up to 50 doses a week once Phase 2a begins.

Metropolitan-based pharmacies will receive \$16 per patient for the first dose administered, with a \$26 payment for the second, when provided at the same pharmacy, while region, rural and remote stores will receive \$19 for the first shot and \$29 for the second.




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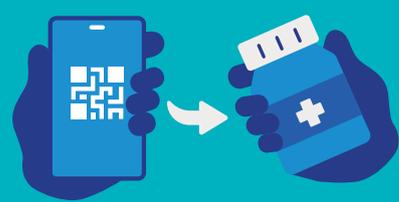
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No logical reason for NIP restrictions

PHARMACIES across Australia should have access to National Immunisation Program vaccines, as a health priority, the Pharmacy Guild of Australia believes.

Currently pharmacists in Victoria, Western Australia and the ACT can administer Government-funded vaccines to eligible patients, with the Guild urging State and Territory Governments in the Northern Territory, NSW, Queensland, South Australia and Tasmania to implement legislation expanding NIP access to pharmacists immediately.

Guild National President, Trent Twomey, said there was no logical reason for the States and the NT to be lagging behind in giving pharmacists access to NIP vaccines.

"The effectiveness of NIP vaccine access to pharmacists in Victoria, WA and ACT shows just how successful, and acceptable to patients, the program is," he said.

"Pharmacists are the most accessible healthcare professionals, and pharmacies are open extended hours, so it is essential that we utilise these factors in making access to vaccines easier for eligible NIP patients."

Guild ACT Branch President, Simon Blacker, said the expansion



of the NIP to pharmacists across the country was a "commonsense move" to help reduce the spread of life-threatening diseases including influenza.

"People 65 years and older are at high risk of developing serious complications from flu compared with young, healthy adults, partly because the human immune defences become weaker with increasing age, so its strongly recommended that all adults over 65 years have a flu shot," he said.

"It's important that the community has the greatest possible access and opportunity

to the NIP influenza vaccine and given that most Australians live within a couple of kilometres of a pharmacy, it makes sense to extend full access to the NIP to all pharmacies."

The Guild noted that a number of pharmacies had reported that patients who were eligible for NIP vaccines had opted to pay at the pharmacy because it was easier and more convenient.

The organisation added that many of these patients were unaware that they were eligible to receive free vaccines, until their pharmacist mentioned it to them.

No jail time for guilty pharmacist

WESTERN Australian pharmacist, Adam Chinotti, is facing a Pharmacy Board of Australia investigation after pleading guilty to helping himself to Valium and selling it on to a man who took his own life.

Derby Magistrate Court heard Chinotti stole a range of prescription medicines including Valium, Ritalin and Endone, from the pharmacy he was working at, *ABC News* reported.

The court was told he sold 60 Valium tablets to Jordan Sherwood, who died after consuming them all.

Chinotti's lawyer said his interaction with Sherwood had been driven by greed, when asked by friends to supply the drugs.

"He simply saw dollar signs and greed just overtook him," the lawyer said.

"He's deeply remorseful."

Magistrate, Elizabeth Wood, issued Chinotti with a nine-month sentence, suspended for 12 months and fined him \$500.

TGA moves to address meds shortages

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has moved to address supply shortages of a number of sertraline medication, granting section 19a approval for the importation and supply of Ranbaxy UK's sertraline 50mg and 100mg film-coated tablets until 30 Jun.

The TGA has previously issued Section 19A approvals for the importation and supply

unregistered product - Sertraline 100mg tablets, USP (Cipla) and Sertraline 50mg tablets, USP (Cipla) to Medsurge Healthcare Pty Ltd - until 30 Jun to address the supply shortages.

Currently more than 400 products are listed as being in short supply, with 45 being deemed to be "critical shortages".

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Dispensary Corner

IRISH police have arrested two women upon their return to Dublin after they refused to go into hotel quarantine following a trip to Dubai for plastic surgery.

The duo, Kristie McGrath, 30, and Niamh Mulreany, 25, were charged under the Health Act, and brought before Tallaght District Court on Sat, where Judge Miriam Walsh questioned where their trip for breast enhancement surgery was "essential travel".

The court heard local police spent two hours trying to explain the regulations to the women, who claimed they had been unaware that mandatory hotel quarantine had been introduced on the Emerald Isle.

The *Irish Independent* reported that the two mums pleaded for bail with their solicitor, Michael French, citing humanitarian grounds.

Judge Walsh remanded the pair on their own bonds of €800 each and ordered that they must lodge €500 cash.

She also demanded independent sureties of €2,000 to be approved in each case, of which €1,800 was to be lodged with the court while the remaining €200 was to be frozen in their bank accounts.

McGrath and Mulreany were ordered to surrender their passports and once the bail money was organised they were to be released to a government allocated hotel quarantine facility for 14 days, at a cost of €2,500.

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