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## Dispensary Corner

**ONCE** again we're holding our heads in our hands as conspiracy theorists race for the next unproven COVID-19 miracle cure, rather than getting vaccinated.

As had been the case with hydroxychloroquine, when it was touted as a treatment for the pandemic virus, without significant evidence, pharmacies in the US are now facing a flood of prescriptions for ivermectin, after a pre-print study (which has since been withdrawn) suggested it delivered positive results.

US news site, *The Daily Beast*, reported that as pharmacies have limited supplies of the antiparasitic, some of those refusing Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved COVID vaccines have "taken to raiding rural tractor supply stores in search of ivermectin horse paste" to treat the virus.

"Personally I haven't had this situation, but if I did, I would sneak horse paste into the hospital and would rub it into the armpit myself to save my loved one," one Facebook conspiracy fan said.

While it may seem far-fetched to believe there are people out there who will turn to veterinary medicines over human vaccines, a Texas-based poison control specialist noted "there is certainly a noticeable increase in calls to poisons centres regarding ivermectin being misused".

"It's clear the majority are associated with a belief it will prevent or treat COVID-19," the specialist said.

## Fair COVAX funding

**PLANNED** incentive payments for GPs to provide in-reach COVID-19 vaccination (COVAX) services to workers in aged and disability care should be available to all immunisers, Pharmacy Guild of Australia National President, Trent Twomey, says.

Under a Federal Government-funded scheme, GPs will receive a \$1,000 payment once they vaccinate 50 aged care and disability workers, with a \$20 fee paid for every additional employee immunised through a dedicated in-reach program.

Royal Australian College of General Practice President, Dr Karen Price, said the "additional payments are just what the doctor ordered".

However, Twomey told *Pharmacy Daily* that community pharmacists and other vaccinators should not be excluded from such payments.

"The Guild believes all vaccinators should be on an equal footing to ensure maximum uptake



of vaccinations across Australia," he said.

Twomey said that community pharmacies were well-equipped to provide similar in-reach services for the aged and disability care sectors.

"Community pharmacists have all the skills and training to provide a service for the aged and disability care sectors - where many pharmacists already have a close relationship on medicines supply and medicines checks," he said.

### Upskilling for emerging aged care role

**THE** Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) *Residential Aged Care Pharmacist: Foundation Training Program* aims to upskill pharmacists to play a greater role in the sector the Society's National President, Associate Professor Chris Freeman, says.

Launching the course Freeman said it supported recommendations from the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety which focussed on ways to improve quality use of medicines and reduce the use of chemical restraints.

"The Aged Care Foundation Training Program is the only short

## Guild Update

### Increased COVAX supply

**PHARMACY** Guild of Australia national president, Adjunct Professor Trent Twomey, has welcomed the expected delivery of more COVID-19 vaccine doses.


In recent days Governments have announced six figure numbers of doses to be delivered immediately into some capital cities and regional areas to help address supply problems.

Experience shows that in some areas, two weeks of vaccine stocks have been used in two days.

Twomey is also calling for minimal wait times between pharmacies joining the rollout and arrival of vaccine stocks. It's important pharmacies be able to use the Community Service Obligation wholesaler network for prompt deliveries.

The Prime Minister continues to acknowledge to Australians the vital role pharmacists play in the national vaccination effort.

As Twomey says, all aspects of life carry risk but the way to mitigate COVID risk is through having the vaccine if you are over 18.





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