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Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features three pages of news plus full pages from:

- ENT Technologies
- RJS Machinery

Allergy relief

WITH spring around the corner hayfever sufferers can find relief in minutes with eze allergy nasal spray.

See **page four** for more.

No threat to vax

DISTRIBUTION of COVID-19 vaccines will not be impacted by a proposed strike by members of the Transport Workers Union (TWU).

A TWU spokesperson said any action taken against Linfox will not affect the firm's ability to fulfil its Government contract to distribute the vaccines.

Concerns grow over antibiotic use

STEPS need to be taken to better monitor antibiotic use in residential aged care facilities, with high rates of inappropriate use of medicines identified in the sector by researchers from Macquarie University.

The systematic review and meta-analysis of antibiotic use in aged care facilities across 34 countries between 1985 and 2019, found almost 70% of Australian aged care residents received an antibiotic over the course of a year, compared with 54% in the UK and 63% of patients in North America and the Netherlands.

Macquarie University Australian Institute of Health Innovation Senior Research Fellow, Dr Magda Raban, said the analysis showed only 28.5% of antibiotic courses prescribed in residential aged care in Australia and overseas were deemed to be appropriate.

"Antibiotics should only be given if the patient has symptoms consistent with an infection requiring antibiotic



treatment," Raban said.

"There are clear guidelines for the use of antibiotics and the data suggests that people in Australian residential aged care facilities are being prescribed antibiotics too often."

Raban warned inappropriate use of antibiotics was a key contributor to increasing antimicrobial resistance, and called for measures to be implemented to boost medication management in the

aged care sector.

"Using current systems, some aged care facilities find it difficult to monitor what medication their residents are taking, for how long, and if it is appropriate," she said.

"By linking IT systems, we can provide real time data that alerts a facility if a patient is taking antibiotics when their condition does not warrant this."

The meta-analysis was published in *Plos One*.

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Angst surpassing virus in COVID crisis

AUSTRALIANS are becoming increasingly weighed down by the mental health impacts of life in COVID-19-induced lockdowns and need a booster of hope, Priceline Pharmacy General Manager, Andrew Vidler, believes.

In an open letter published on the Priceline website over the weekend, Vidler urged Australians to get vaccinated to free the nation from the growing turmoil of COVID-19 restrictions.

“Every single week at Priceline Pharmacy we enjoy a unique and privileged insight as millions of Australians come to us, seeking guidance on health, wellbeing or beauty, often at their most honest and vulnerable,” he said.

“It seems to us, that the real health crisis has gone beyond a virus and we have become a nation of angst. We see it in the faces and the body language. We hear it in the words, and we can sense it in the mood. People are burdened by the threat of being

sick and the restrictions that affect how they live, where they go and what they hope for.

“As a pharmacy business, we know from experience that humans love a glass half full (sometimes literally, but always metaphorically) and the hope of better.

“But right now, our hope needs a booster.

“For us, we’re committed to ensuring people feel better - not just physically, but in spirit and mind - and we believe central to this is a sense of control over their own lives.

“Yet, as we look for a pathway out of this crisis, people don’t feel understood or heard or cared for and the notion of choice has become a selfish weapon for those who are not prepared to work for the greater good.

“We need everyone who can be vaccinated to get vaccinated.

“We encourage all Australians to remember that we are the



Commonwealth of Australia where we work together for the common good. As we approach the critical thresholds for vaccination (approximately 70%-80% of the population) we will be able to reclaim the freedoms we are currently desperately missing.

“As a crucial supplier of this vaccine, we know it’s the only way back to a country free from angst. And that’s something my team and I are willing to work hard for.”

Blooms opens Adelaide store

BLOOMS The Chemist is continuing its expansion, opening its first South Australian store in Adelaide’s inner south-west Castle Plaza.

Pharmacy owner, Roy Young, who has worked at the store since moving to Australia from Scotland 16 years ago, said the team was excited to join the Blooms network.

“Working in a truly community-centric group like Blooms The Chemist empowers us at Castle Plaza to continue our strong commitment to improving the health outcomes of the Edwardstown community,” he said.

The Blooms network includes more than 100 pharmacies across NSW, Queensland, Victoria and Western Australia, in addition to the new South Australian store.



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Dispensary Corner

FOR months global health messaging has been clear - if you want life to return to something close to normal get vaccinated.

While members of AFL side, North Melbourne, have fronted a video campaign to encourage fans to get immunised against COVID-19, stars from other codes have been less enthusiastic about taking a shot.

With a low uptake of the vaccines amongst its roster and the threat of having to forfeit games if an outbreak occurs, American Football side, the Minnesota Vikings, has moved to tackle hesitancy amongst its players by bringing in infectious diseases specialist, Dr Michael Osterholm, to counter concerns and misconceptions.

Head coach, Mike Zimmer, said he was hopeful that Osterholm could sway his stars to get vaccinated, after it emerged the team's quarter-back, Kirk Cousins, is unvaccinated and has missed training after being identified as a close contact of a positive case.

The 33-year-old has previously said he would rather sit inside a plexiglass box than be vaccinated against the virus that has claimed the lives of more than 630,000 Americans, including 7,860 people in Minnesota.

While Cousins may not be cut by the Vikings over his vaccine hesitancy, his stance has seen Holland Hospital in western Michigan drop him as a spokesperson.

HEALTH & BEAUTY

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References: Horak F et al. Azelastine Nasal Spray for the treatment of Allergic Rhinitis and Non Allergic Rhinitis Expert Reviews in Clinical Immunology 5(6) pp 659-669. Singh U et al. Azelastine desensitisation of the TRPV1: a potential mechanism explaining its therapeutic effect in non allergic rhinitis. American J of Rhinology and Allergy 2014 Vol 28 pp 215-224. Australian Asthma Handbook. Managing allergic rhinitis in adults and adolescents with asthma. www.asthmahandbook.org.au/clinical-issues/allergic-rhinitis/adults-adolescents

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