

Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features two pages of news.

Corum and Fred set for court date

THE ongoing dispute between pharmacy software providers, Corum Group and FredIT, over distributions from PharmX, is set to be settled in the Victorian Supreme Court next Oct.

Corum initiated proceedings in May, claiming FredIT had received a share of distributions from PharmX for the 2014 to 2019 financial years, which it should not have been given, due to a change of control at FredIT.

FredIT has countered with claims for unpaid distributions for FY20, during which it ceased to be a securityholder in PharmX, and Corum became sole owner of the platform.

Evidence in both cases is due to be served in the first half of 2022, with the two proceedings to be heard together commencing on 24 Oct 2022.

PSA backs kids' COVAX

MOVES to grant provisional approval for the use of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine (COVAX) in children aged five to 11 years will fill the missing link in Australia's vaccination campaign, the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) believes.

With legislative changes required to enable pharmacists in the ACT, NSW and Tasmania, to administer the shots to children under 12 years, PSA National President, Associate Professor Chris Freeman, said the profession would play a key role in meeting the demand for children to be immunised.

"This is welcomed news for Australian parents, whose children will soon be able to book in for their COVID-19 vaccinations – I know many would like their children vaccinated before the start of the 2022 school year.

"In recent months we've seen unvaccinated children return to high-risk settings such as classrooms, and as expected, many schools have subsequently become exposure sites," he said.

"PSA believes that it is imperative that all Australian children can access COVID-19 vaccinations in order to keep themselves, their



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families and the community safe.

"Opening up to this age bracket now means that there are 2.3 million children who will be in need of vaccination, at the same time as the majority of Australians become eligible to receive their booster dose over the coming months.

"Given this, it is imperative that pharmacists are paid fairly for their vaccination services, and at least equally to other health providers.

"Vaccination is the best way to ensure these susceptible populations and their families are protected against the virus – plugging the hole in national immunity.

"Pharmacists are trained and experienced in vaccinating younger age groups against other vaccine-preventable diseases and are now ready to protect them against COVID-19.

"Given the expedient uptake from the 12-15 age bracket, now at 76.6% first dose and 67.5% double dose, we are confident that public demand will be high for 5-11s."

Freeman added that the PSA would be working with authorities to ensure pharmacists have access to up-to-date advice regarding the vaccine's safety and effectiveness.



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Dispensary Corner

WORKPLACE disputes can get out of hand, with ill-considered comments being blurted out in the heat of the moment.

But seldom do employees follow pharmacist, Robert E Sapp's approach to conflict resolution and pull a knife on their supervisor.

The 63-year-old was working in the dispensary at the Fort Leonard Wood Military Base in Missouri, US, when a discussion with his boss allegedly escalated from "heated" to a violent tussle during which Sapp drew a knife and stabbed the man.

When another employee intervened Sapp ran out of the pharmacy and got into his car to flee the scene, but was subsequently detained by military police, who recovered the knife, which had "visible hair and blood" on the blade, the US Attorney's Office Western District of Missouri reported.

Sapp's victim was taken to the base's hospital where he was treated for non-life threatening injuries, including multiple stab wounds.

Prosecutors said the evidence will be presented to a US Federal Court jury to determine Sapp's guilt or innocence.

Biosimilar boost critical

AUSTRALIA needs to implement policies to drive the uptake of biosimilar medicines in 2022 and mitigate against future medicines shortages, healthcare company, Organon, believes.

The company, which announced it has joined the Generic and Biosimilar Medicines Association (GBMA) as a Biosimilar member today, and is also a member of Medicines Australia, the representative group for originator drug manufacturers - the only business to be part of both organisations.

"Now is a critical time for Australia to get the policy settings right so that we can realise the promise of biosimilars and all that they offer patients, healthcare professionals and the health system

more broadly," Organon Access and External Affairs Director, Luke Cornish, said.

GBMA Independent Chair, Jane Halton, welcomed Organon's decision to join the organisation, which followed the passage of legislation approving its five-year strategic agreement with the Federal Government (*PD 03 Dec*).

Halton added that "the health and welfare of patients" was at the centre of the Association's focus on unlocking more biosimilar medicines.

"The GBMA and its members are looking forward to developing smart policies that will allow us to maintain the delivery of high value care to all patients, through the secure supply of high quality affordable medicines," she said.

DDS celebrates 20th anniversary

DISCOUNT Drugs Stores (DDS) is celebrating its 20th anniversary, by offering members of its new DiscountPlus loyalty program - which was launched in Oct - the chance to win a \$20,000 prize.

Over the last two decades the brand has evolved from a group of 14 pharmacies in rural Queensland to more than 120.

Marking 20 years in business, DDS Co-Founder, John Clark, said the brand "grew from a simple idea to shake up the market and

redefine what it means to be a discount pharmacy".

"I'm proud to see that whilst the brand has grown exponentially over the past 20 years, it has remained true to offering value, simplicity, good customer service and putting its people above all else," he said.

The group is also offering a range of rewards and surprises to its franchise partners and pharmacy teams, as part of its 20th anniversary celebrations.



Guild Update

Front line of history

"**FRONT** line of history" was the theme of the end-of-year gathering at Old Government House, Canberra, last week, hosted by the Pharmacy Guild of Australia.

MPs and Senators joined with Public Service leaders, pharmacy assistants and other health stakeholders; Guild National President Trent Twomey paid tribute to the contribution all have made to protecting and enhancing the health of Australians in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Endorsing this, Federal Health Minister Greg Hunt said: "In the midst of the pandemic, when others were closing down you stayed open; that was no mean feat; (community pharmacists) have been there right through and these things matter."

He added: "People trust you; you have been there; you have earned that trust."

Minister Hunt said the last 18 months to two years are arguably the most significant in the life of the Guild, outcomes of which community pharmacists can be most proud.

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