

## Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today has four pages of news, plus a full page from TerryWhite Chemmart.

## Get a shot in the arm for your biz

PHARMACY owners looking to bolster their stores' offering are being invited to join the TerryWhite Chemmart group.

Franchisees receive access to "significant marketing investment", including local area support.

TWC also offers extensive staff training, access to competitive trading terms and a market leading booking system for pharmacy services.

The group's exclusive corporate program also delivers increased footfall for franchisees.

See **page five** for more.

## Guild backs mandatory AIR recording

PHARMACIST immunisers will be required to record every influenza vaccine they administer on the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) from 01 Mar under new mandatory reporting measures backed by the Pharmacy Guild of Australia.

The recording requirements will also apply to COVID-19 vaccines, as soon as they become available, while other National Immunisation Program vaccines will have to be recorded from 01 Jul.

Immunisers who fail to comply with the new measures will face fines of \$6,660.

A Guild spokesperson told Pharmacy Daily that, "the Guild fully supports the use of AIR and recommends community pharmacies record the vaccination services they deliver for patients".

The implementation of legislation mandating the use of AIR comes less than a year after the National Centre for Surveillance's Review of pharmacist vaccination reporting

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found "significant underreporting to the register" (PD 16 Jun 2020).

However, the Guild Tasmanian Branch Director, Monique McKrill reported that the reporting issues were associated with problems "at the receiving end" at the time (PD 22 Jun 2020).

"The AIR has confirmed there is a backlog of pharmacy data that has been appropriately submitted but which they have been unable to load onto the register," she said.

Guild Queensland Branch

Director, Gerard Benedet, told Pharmacy Daily it was important to "make sure everyone understands that it wasn't a MedAdvisor or GuildLink problem" (PD 26 Jun 2020).

"Both of those platforms are doing the right thing," he said.

"We look forward to the AIR sorting out its backlog and giving people a more accurate picture of the recording of vaccinations across all immunisers, whether that's nurse, doctor or pharmacist."

## FIP moves to boost pharmacist COVAX

THE International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) has launched a new tool to encourage regulators to create the necessary regulatory frameworks to combat the COVID-19 pandemic through pharmacist-led vaccination programs.

The pharmacy-based vaccination self-assessment tool consists of a checklist that helps



identify priority actions related to vaccination, testing, prescribing and supply chain management.

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Pharmacy Daily

## NSW needs regulatory reset: Jones

**PHARMACY** regulation in NSW “needs a great reset” to bring it into line with other jurisdictions across the country, Pharmacy Guild of Australia NSW Branch Vice President, Paul Jones, believes.

Jones, who has nominated for the NSW Branch presidency, against incumbent, David Heffernan, and Tim Hewitt, told *Pharmacy Daily* that the Guild needed to raise issues stemming from the regulatory approach being taken by the Pharmacy Council of NSW, with State Government officials.

“It has come to my notice that, many well regarded community pharmacy owners have been subjected to conditions being placed upon them by the Pharmacy Council,” he said.

“I feel there is injustice occurring to my guild members and the only recourse is to approach the NSW Health Minister and possibly the Premier.



“In this COVID-19 environment with its extra pressure we are all working under and the level of appreciation by all levels of Government.

“This extra pressure from the Pharmacy Council must be reviewed by the NSW Government as it is atypical of others State Councils and it is destabilising community pharmacy.”

Jones also called for the

implementation of a single consumer complaint system, featuring delegates with community pharmacy experience, rather than the two which currently operate in the State.

**MEANWHILE**, the deadline for eligible Guild members to cast their ballots for contested positions within their state/territory branch committee is 5pm AEDT on 17 Feb.

## TGA joins EMA's OPEN initiative

**THE** Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) is one of five non-European Union regulators to be invited to join the European Medicines Agency (EMA) on the evaluation of vaccines and therapeutics to combat COVID-19.

The TGA will contribute to meetings of the EMA pandemic taskforce, and will be an active participant in the consideration of applications for vaccines and medicines for COVID-19.

“This will greatly assist TGA in understanding the medical and scientific considerations made in the review of these products by the EMA and other major global regulators,” the TGA said.

However, the TGA will continue to make fully independent decisions on approvals for products in Australia.



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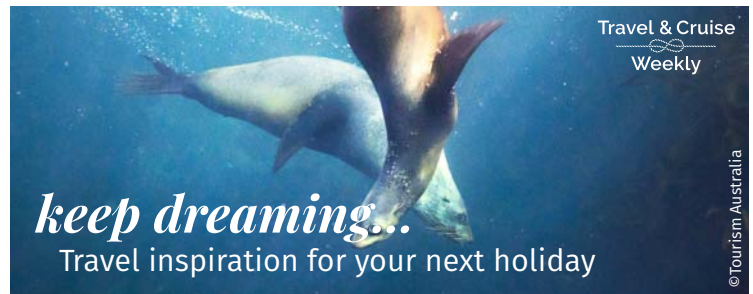
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## Sigma in prime position for growth

**PHARMACY** wholesaler, Sigma Healthcare, is optimistic about the future with CEO, Mark Hooper, reporting the company is “in a prime position to accelerate growth” in the 2022 Financial Year.

In a statement to the Australian Securities Exchange (ASX) this morning, the company reported “strong growth through the second half of FY21, leading to the company providing FY21 Underlying Earnings Before Interest, Taxes, Depreciation and Amortisation (EBITDA) of around \$80 million”, which is up by more than 35% on FY20.

Sigma also confirmed it had reached an agreement with Westpac to extend its \$250 million receivables purchase agreement for another three-year term.

Hooper said Sigma had proved resilient in delivering against expectations despite the challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

“The business continued to perform strongly through the second half, with sustained momentum underpinning our FY21 guidance and confidence in FY22,” he said.

“Our ability to leverage investments already made will also see Underlying Return on Investment Capital return to double digits in FY21, and we continue to expect to achieve our previously stated target of \$100 million underlying EBITDA by FY23.”

Sigma Chief Financial Officer, Jackie Pearson, said the extension of the group’s agreement with Westpac would ensure the business meets its funding requirements including the final stages of its “transformational investment program and mid-month peak receivables”.

Sigma also reported its net debt was “around \$50 million at 31



Jan and is expected to peak in the second half of FY22 in line with the completion of the capital investment cycle, before receding from that point as a result of strong operating cash generation”.

The company is due to release its FY21 results on 23 Mar.

## Wheezo rollout gathers pace

**PHARMACY** Catalyst is set to launch Respi’s wheezo in-pharmacy asthma patient program across its network of more than 350 stores in Mar.

In a statement issued to the Australian Securities Exchange (ASX) this morning, Respi reported that since the fourth quarter of the 2020 calendar year, it had onboarded three pharmacy groups and a number of independent stores with a total network of 500 pharmacies to support its wheezo program and device.

Respi said it was in negotiations with a number of banner groups representing a pharmacy of more than 1,000 stores across the country.

The company hopes pharmacy-led patient initiatives will boost health outcomes.

## PharMIbridge training for regional Vic

**PHARMACISTS** from regional Victoria who have signed up to take part in the Bridging the Gap between Physical and Mental Illness in Community Pharmacy (PharMIbridge) Randomised Control Trial, will undergo training in Melbourne this week.

The trial, which has been funded through the Sixth Community Pharmacy Agreement, will see up to 15 community pharmacies in regional Victoria test the effectiveness of an individualised,

pharmacist-led support service (PharMIbridge intervention) for people living with severe and persistent mental illness (SPMI), compared to a standard in-pharmacy medication review service (MedsCheck).

The training workshop is followed by support from the research team from the University of Sydney and Griffith University over the nine months of trial implementation.

**CLICK HERE** for more information about the trial.

## Pharmacists crucial to CBD education

**PHARMACISTS** are set to play a key role in supporting patients who are seeking access to medicinal cannabis, Australian Natutral Therapeutics Group CEO, Matt Cantelo, believes.

Despite the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) down-scheduling low-dose cannabidiol (CBD) to Pharmacist-Only, Cantelo told *Pharmacy Daily* that with no products that meet the S3 criteria it could be “anywhere from six months to two years” before an over-the-counter (OTC)

medication becomes available in Australia.

In the meantime, Cantelo said, “pharmacists should explain to patients that while CBD at 150mg per day is now legal OTC, there are no approved products on the market yet”.

He advised pharmacists to direct patients seeking CBD medications to talk to their doctors about accessing medicinal cannabis through the special access scheme (SAS), potentially at higher doses.

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## Dispensary Corner

**RASTAFARIANS** in Jamaica are suffering a “cultural embarrassment” as the nation’s nascent supply of legal cannabis has dried up.

The Caribbean nation legalised the use of small amounts of marijuana in 2015, with adherents of the local religion allowed to smoke weed for “sacramental purposes”.

However diverse weather conditions ranging from severe drought to heavy rains have led to significant shortages from local suppliers.

The issues have been compounded because farmers usually tend their marijuana fields at night, which has not been possible due to strict COVID-19 measures including an island-wide 6pm curfew.

**OSTEOPOROSIS** is unlikely to be a major problem for fans watching today’s Super Bowl football match in the USA, with dairy farmers predicting that Americans will eat more than 9,000 tonnes of cheese during the game, *Fox News* reports.

Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin says its cheesemaking members prepared for a surge in sales ahead of the big game, with records already set this year amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

“The desire for recipes with cheese - the ultimate comfort food - coupled with the continued craze for charcuterie boards, ensures that cheese will be the real winner of the big game,” said Wisconsin Cheese Chief Marketing Officer, Suzanne Fanning.

## FIP cans 2021 Congress

**PLANS** to host the 80th World Congress of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences in Seville, Spain, this Sep have been abandoned due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Spanish city had originally been scheduled to host the event last year, but the event was switched to a virtual format as a result of the health crisis.

Announcing the decision to abandon plans to have an in-person event in 2021, the International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) said it would continue to deliver online education and information programs throughout the year.

In a statement released on Fri, FIP President, Dominique Jordan, said with the emergence of new variants of COVID-19 and the resulting impact the virus is having on health systems around the world, “holding a Congress in Sep would not be the right thing to do”.

“We know that as many pharmacists as possible must continue to be available to patients and health systems under stress, and we would not wish to provide any means for the virus to



spread,” he said.

“We trust that you will understand this decision, and encourage you to take opportunities to benefit from FIP’s focus on digital events.

“We hope that we will all be able to convene face to face in Seville, in principle between 18 and 22 Sep 2022, under better global circumstances so that we may celebrate, in-person, the huge contributions that pharmacy has made to global health and the advances made during the COVID-19 pandemic.”

The 2021 World Congress had originally been slated to take place in Brisbane in Sep (*PD* 03 Aug 2018), however it has yet to be confirmed if the Queensland city with host the event in 2023.



## Weekly Comment

Welcome to Pharmacy Daily’s weekly comment feature. This week’s contributor is



**Botrous Yousef, Network Partner at TerryWhite Chemmart Caddens Corner, Bloomfield Medical Centre, Gregory Hills Park and Marrickville, NSW.**

### People make the difference

**IT’S** no secret that our company is fond of the TerryWhite Chemmart model.

Having opened four stores and counting we have been amazed by the development and growth of the brand.

What makes TWC stand out from the rest are the people and culture behind the brand. From the network development managers to the project managers, the National Retail Integration Team and the Business Development Team—all you get is amazing service that is beyond words.

I love my pharmacy businesses because of the success story that I get to create and live - I do it for my family and for the amazing teams of employees and culture we nurture. TerryWhite Chemmart is just that—a family of individuals who are eager to be part of your success story because it’s their story too.

The only way to experience it is to be part of it. 2020 challenged all brands and industries. It’s concreted one thing for our company and that is, when hardship knocks on your door, you want to make sure that you are part of something strong, resilient and supportive.

To those thinking of joining TerryWhite Chemmart, you won’t regret it.

## Win with Azclear Action

Everyday this week Pharmacy Daily & Azclear Action are giving away an Azclear Action pack valued at RRP \$70.00.

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