

Today's issue of PD

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

- Packapill
- Sigma Healthcare

Deliver fast

PHARMACY owners looking to extend their delivery services are being invited to become a Packapill partner.

Packapill offers pharmacies a platform to connect with patients and deliver prescription and over-the-counter medicines to customers within three hours.

See **page four** for more.

Discover Sigma's PharmaSave

SIGMA Healthcare's PharmaSave brand offers pharmacy owners the tools to drive their business forward.

The low-cost, self-managed model focuses on 'care, value and service', and can be tailored to individual needs.

See **page five** for more.

States take positive steps on COVAX

NSW, South Australia and Victoria are joining Queensland in activating community pharmacies as COVID-19 vaccination (COVAX) sites, but more work is required to optimise the use of the pharmacy network, the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) believes.

With pharmacy COVAX rollouts starting in regional and rural locations yesterday, PSA leaders across the country are calling on health officials to "activate the full pharmacist workforce now" to help combat COVID outbreaks in major metropolitan areas.

Welcoming the NSW Government's decision to activate the State's 1,250 approved pharmacies, PSA National President, Associate Professor Chris Freeman has called for "a unified, patient-centric approach that puts the community first".

"It is great to see NSW utilising its full vaccinator workforce," he said.

"Pharmacists are the most obvious solution to increasing accessibility of vaccinations.

"We hope that more jurisdictions will follow NSW's lead."

Yesterday saw 21 regional NSW stores in the State's community pharmacy-based COVAX trial, joining Capital Chemist Braidwood,

which administered doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine last Fri (**PD** 16 Jul), a move backed by PSA NSW Branch President, Chelsea Felkai.

"We are also pleased to see that pharmacists can now vaccinate in NSW regardless of practice setting," she said.

"This means that pharmacists will be able to play a greater role in administering vaccinations in GP clinics, aged care facilities, and vaccination hubs.

"We have almost 5,000 skilled, trusted and experienced pharmacist vaccinators across NSW, and when fully activated, they will make a substantial difference to the population's uptake of the vaccine.

"Today's on-boarding of these regional pharmacies is a great first step."

PSA Victorian Branch President, John Jackson described the decision to activate eight pharmacies in rural and remote areas as "a start, but on-boarding less than a dozen local pharmacies in regional areas simply isn't enough".

"The state is currently in the midst of yet another outbreak, therefore, utilising community pharmacists at this juncture is imperative to protecting Victorians," he said.




A further seven pharmacies in Melbourne's outer suburbs, identified as areas of need by the Victorian Department of Health have been given the green-light to join the campaign in the coming weeks by the Federal Government.

Among the first South Australian pharmacists to administer a COVAX in a community pharmacy yesterday, PSA SA/NT Branch President, Robyn John, said it was wonderful to be on the frontline, "disappointingly, pharmacist involvement in the rollout is still incredibly limited".

"Littlehampton is about 30 to 40 minutes away from Adelaide's CBD, and given the close proximity to the State's capital city, why can't metropolitan pharmacists play their part?" she asked.

"We already have a skilled, trusted, experienced, and easily accessible vaccinator workforce at governments' disposal – so we must activate them now!"





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 GuildDigital



Community must protect pharmacy

PATIENTS in COVID-19 outbreak zones are being urged to think twice before stepping into their local community pharmacy, to avoid potentially exposing staff to the pandemic virus.

Professional Pharmacists Australia (PPA) issued a nationwide plea to people who suspect they may have been exposed to the virus to stay away from pharmacies, after several stores have been identified as potential exposure sites during the ongoing outbreaks in NSW and Victoria.

PPA President, Geoff March, urged patients in hotspots to ensure they are not spreading the virus to pharmacy workers or vulnerable members of the community.

"Pharmacies play an absolutely critical role in supporting community health and it's vital that the health of the pharmacy workforce is not compromised so that these important services can continue to be delivered," he said.

"Additionally, pharmacies are often attended by people who are more vulnerable due to their health issues, so it is particularly important that they are not exposed to the COVID virus.

"We urge every member of the public to think carefully before you enter a pharmacy. Ask yourself if you have even the slightest symptoms and whether you think you have been exposed to the COVID-19 virus.

"If you think the answer might be yes, do not enter a pharmacy and put others at risk. Instead, head to a testing facility to receive a COVID-19 test.

"In NSW and Victoria, always wear a mask, use the appropriate QR code to check-in and comply with all public health orders when entering pharmacy premises.

"If a customer has respiratory symptoms and is unsure what to do, seek advice by calling the pharmacy instead of visiting."

With increasing numbers of



community pharmacies joining the COVID-19 vaccination rollout, March said the PPA would redouble its efforts to protect employee pharmacists.

"The vaccine rollout is now being extended to community pharmacies and that's welcome news, but it does mean an increase in the number of customers visiting their local pharmacy so it's absolutely critical that we get this right.

"To ensure pharmacies can continue to safely administer the vaccine to Australians, we urge customers to think carefully before visiting their local pharmacy, to protect pharmacists and vulnerable members of the community."



Dispensary Corner

ABOUT 20% of US citizens believe that there is, or probably is, a microchip hidden in the COVID-19 vaccines.

That's the shocking finding of a new YouGov study conducted in partnership with *The Economist*, with one in five American respondents believing the bizarre conspiracy theory is either "definitely true" or "probably true".

The poll of 1,500 US adult citizens conducted earlier this month asked peoples' opinions on the following statement "The US Government is using the COVID-19 vaccine to microchip the population", with the delusion most common among people aged 30-44 where 7% said it was "definitely true" and 20% said it was "probably true".

Less educated respondents with lower incomes were also more likely to believe the story.

Less than half (46%) of those polled said the widely debunked statement was "definitely false".

The *BBC* traced the origin of the idiotic claim to a Mar 2020 interview with Microsoft founder Bill Gates, who forecast that "eventually we will have some digital certificates" to show vaccination status.

He made no mention of microchips, but did reference a study of technology that could record personal immunisations in a special "tattoo" administered at the same time as an injection.

Tackling colds

GUILD Learning and Development is partnering with Proctor & Gamble to launch a new QCPP-approved training module focused on preventing cold symptoms.

The *Early intervention to prevent common cold symptoms* course, highlights how good hygiene measures and the use of products to trap and remove cold viruses can help shorten the duration of a cold - [CLICK HERE](#) for more.

Lockdowns impacting women's health

FORMER nurse and midwife-turned Victorian Shadow Minister for Health, Georgie Crozier, warns repeated lockdowns and funding cuts to breast cancer screening services in the State "are having a devastating impact to women's health".

Responding to an error in an article in *PD* yesterday, relating to a Twitter post, which included a "Lockdown #5 checklist" with "Reschedule mammogram" ticked off, Crozier said she was

not suggesting that women delay accessing screening services, but was highlighting the impacts lockdowns are having on women juggling home schooling and their careers, at the expense of attending health services.

"This is the problem and reality of what is happening in Victoria," she said.

"Last year very few screenings were done, [and] what's more the Victorian Government has cut funding to BreastScreen."

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Health workers need to be prioritised

STATE and Territory Governments need to follow Victoria's lead in setting aside COVID-19 vaccines for frontline workers including pharmacy staff and other health professionals, Pharmaceutical Society of Australia NSW Branch President, Chelsea Felkai, believes.

With many pharmacists and pharmacy assistants across the country yet to be vaccinated, Felkai said there needed to be proactive steps taken to immunise people on the frontline.

"Victoria has created 10,000 new spots for healthcare and frontline workers to be prioritised to be bumped up the queue to get vaccinated with the Pfizer shot first," she said.

"That includes pharmacists and their staff.

"It's happening in Victoria, but not anywhere else - it's a great idea and it should've happened everywhere."

Speaking with **Pharmacy Daily**, Felkai also advocated for some innovative thinking when it comes



to helping healthcare workers in the three Sydney Local Government Areas where essential workers are required to get COVID tests every three days.

"It's not easy to scale it up overnight, but we've had this outbreak for a few weeks now, so I'd like to see a little more proactivity coming into this mix, rather than reactivity," she said.

"All those essential workers coming out of Fairfield should be prioritised - they should have their own line.

"There just needs to be a little more thought in some of the processes.

"We're living in a really reactive world and I know we've had to make decisions with little information on short notice, but with things like this what is the rate limiting step?

"Is it that there's not enough testing kits that get delivered each day?

"Is it that they don't have enough workers to physically administer the tests?"

Guild Update

Active Ingredient Prescribing

THE grace period for claiming a pharmaceutical benefit from a non-conformant prescription that is not written by active ingredient will come to an end on 31 July 2021.

Prescriptions written during the grace period and any of their repeats are considered valid for the life of the prescription. Prescriptions written from 1 August 2021 must be written by active ingredient rather than brand to be considered a conformant PBS prescription. Members should ensure staff are vigilant in ensuring they are dispensing conformant PBS prescriptions.

The Department of Health has provided a Fact Sheet with information about the end of the grace period for Active Ingredient Prescribing and what this means for pharmacy staff and patients.

Included with the Fact Sheet is a useful summary for dispensary staff of items excluded from active ingredient prescribing. Members can also access detailed information on exclusions and items recommended to include brand information from the [Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care website](#).

Win With Dermal Therapy

Dermal Therapy and Pharmacy Daily are this week giving away 1 of 5 \$50 Woolworths Gift Cards.

Dermal Therapy's Lip Balm Original is a highly concentrated formula that is specially designed to hydrate and soften severely dry lips.

Proudly Australian made and owned Dermal Therapy's Lip Balm Original is the No. 1 selling lip balm product in Australian Pharmacy*

With visible results in just 1 day, it's no wonder this ultra-moisturising lip balm is Aussie's most loved! **CLICK HERE** for more information.

*IQVIA™, RMS/Sell Out Service, 'Skin treatment & Beauty products', Australian Pharmacy, Total value sales and units, MAT to 29/8/2020

How many days until results can be seen after using Dermal Therapy's Original Lip Balm?

To win, be the first person to send the correct answer to comp@pharmacydaily.com.au



Blooms building for the future

BLOOMS the Chemist will host an in-depth discussion looking at the future of pharmacy and key issues and trends impacting the sector on Tue 27 Jul.

The panel will include local and international speakers including Lloyds Pharmacy UK Clinical Standards Director, Steve Howard, Blooms Head of Retail Emmanuel Vavoulas, pharmacist-turned-politician, Emma McBride, GP Dr Kerry Phelps, and more.

CLICK HERE to register.

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