



Everything you need to know

APP2021 Stand 127 & 128



Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features three pages of news.

Aranda to head Chemo review

FORMER Cancer Council Australia CEO, Professor Sanchia Aranda AM, will head a Federal Government review into efficient and equitable access to chemotherapy medicines.

As part of the 2020-21 Budget, the Government authorised a review of the current Efficient Funding of Chemotherapy (EFC) arrangements.

The review will look at simplifying production, distribution and access along the chemotherapy medicines supply chain.

A discussion paper is set to be released in the coming months alongside a call for submissions, with feedback to help develop a final report due to be delivered to the Federal Government for consideration by 30 Jun 2022.

[CLICK HERE](#) for more.

Better strategies required to cut harm

FUNDING, education and support are needed to ensure pharmacists and pharmacy staff are equipped to deliver harm minimisation services, research reveals.

The study, published in *Addiction and Mental Health in Pharmacy*, involved 28 stakeholders including pharmacy staff and patients, and found that community pharmacies could be viewed as well-placed to support harm minimisation services as they are widely distributed and accessible healthcare destinations.

"Some interviewed stakeholders believed that community pharmacies were underutilised in the provision of harm minimisation and related patient care services, such as support with pain and oral health management and monitoring for infections," the authors said.

"Despite these opinions from stakeholders, interviewed consumers focused solely on the role involving opioid treatment programs (OTP) and needle and syringe programs (NSP).

"This narrow view of the role of community pharmacy is similar to the findings of the 2012 harm

minimisation literature review that identified roles in OTP and provision of sterile needles.

"Some pharmacists described personal benefits from providing harm minimisation services in terms of increased job satisfaction and client rapport.

"Being supportive and non-judgemental were viewed as essential by pharmacists, and stakeholders emphasised the importance of accessible, friendly, and holistic services that incorporate patient-centred care.

"However, stigma was identified as a barrier, with pharmacy staff and consumers sharing stories about consumers feeling stigmatised or staff interacting with these consumers differently compared to other pharmacy consumers."

Financial issues were raised by both patients and pharmacists, with the authors noting that there have been ongoing calls from the pharmacy and medical professions, for the Federal Government to subsidise OTP.

The authors from Griffith University and the Pharmacy Guild of Australia concluded that community pharmacies were "a



valuable healthcare destination that could expand delivery of harm minimisation services".

"There is a need for better strategies at local and national levels to facilitate the harm minimisation role of community pharmacies," they said.

"Community pharmacists have an opportunity to engage consumers requiring support in harm minimisation, explaining their professional obligations to confidentiality and to foster a trusting relationship.

"Better collaboration and sustained linkage between pharmacies and relevant organisations or providers in this sector is vital for the provision of holistic care for these consumers."



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MedAdvisor continues to grow offer

AUSTRALIAN Securities Exchange (ASX) listed medtech firm, MedAdvisor, is continuing to see growth in its in-app payment function.

In its latest quarterly update for the three months to 31 Mar the company reported a 481% increase in revenue, compared with the same period in 2020.

The company noted that the initial integration between MedAdvisor and Adheris Health in the US (PD 02 Nov 2020) was “progressing well”, and will drive revenue growth in the US market.

In the locally, MedAdvisor reported that its share of the Australian pharmacy market had hit 65% with “annual pharmacy churn steady at about 5%”.

The company also revealed that the Mar quarter had seen “record usage of MedAdvisor’s in-app payment with approximately 28%



of all orders now made through” the app.

MedAdvisor also reported that it is working with HealthEngine to rollout a streamlined booking system ahead of in-pharmacy influenza and COVID-19 vaccination activities, with the company getting a revenue share where pharmacies use both systems.

The company’s latest update revealed continued growth of its health program offering.

“Thirty-one health programs funded by pharmaceutical companies were live during the quarter,” the company said.

“Closed deals for the year-to-date now exceed \$2 million with [a] growing health pipeline.”

Gutwein win a milestone for pharmacy

TASMANIAN pharmacists can plan for the future with confidence after the re-election of Premier Peter Gutwein’s Liberal Government, the Pharmacy Guild of Australia believes.

With pre-election promises to extend access to the National Immunisation Program (NIP) to pharmacists, and to review the profession’s scope of practice in the State, Guild Tasmanian Branch President, Helen O’Byrne, said the win represented a

“milestone for community pharmacies” and patients.

“The Government has pledged to review pharmacists’ scope of practice in Tasmania and by any measure this must mean that we will soon be able to provide to patients more of the services we are trained for and qualified to deliver,” she said.

“This will be a major step in improving health outcomes for patients while also helping to ease pressure on doctors.”

Prevention the cure for AMA

INVESTMENT in preventative health will be key to addressing inequities in the health system, the Australian Medical Association (AMA) believes.

In its submission in response to the Federal Department of Health’s draft National Preventative Health Strategy, the AMA called for greater funding to be allocated to preventative measures, with AMA President, Dr Omar Khorshid, describing the current allocation of 1.7% of the health budget as “woefully inadequate”.

The AMA has called for the implementation of a tax on sugar-sweetened beverages and “a volumetric tax on alcohol to source revenue for increased funding, rather than taking from other areas of the already-stretched health budget”.

The AMA also backed recommendations aimed at boosting health literacy and cancer screening.

Weekly Comment

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



Sally Parker, Chief Operations Officer, Wizard Pharmacy.

A complete pharmacy platform

REMEMBER playing with building blocks when you were young? The blocks that fit perfectly together always created the strongest towers.

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Dispensary Corner

EFFORTS by one US pharmacist to exorcise medical misinformation being spread on social media platforms has prompted the ire of those spouting inaccurate claims about vaccines and miracle cures.

The Doctor of Pharmacy, Savannah Sparks, had dropped truthbombs on TikTok under her handle, @Rxorcist, calling out people who promote potentially harmful treatments with no scientific backing.

Adding to the social media slaps she issues, Sparks reports the purveyors of dangerous nonsense - including one person who claimed to have falsified their vaccine record, and who turned out to be a practising nurse.

While Sparks crusade to educate people has gained her a lot of online "likes" (more than 15.3 million), those who have been less receptive to her messages have resorted to online abuse, with the pharmacist reporting she has received death threats, which she has passed on to local police.

Despite the threats and having photos of her mother's home published on 4chan, Sparks said she will continue to call people out for spreading misinformation.

"If I'm not willing to do it, who else would step up to do it?" she asked.

"The things that I talk about are a huge deal.

"Public health is a huge deal, especially when 500,000 Americans have died from this virus."

AHPRA to act on Indigenous deaths

THE Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) has vowed to take action against health practitioners who fail to deliver adequate care to patients in custody.

AHPRA issued the pledge after the State Administrative Tribunal of Western Australia ruled that Dr Vafa Naderi behaved in a way that constituted professional misconduct when treating Yamatji woman, Julieka Dhu, while she was in police custody in relation to unpaid fines, in Aug 2014.

Following a coronial inquest into Dhu's death and an independent investigation by AHPRA into the medical treatment she received, the Medical Board of Australia referred Naderi to the Tribunal in Jun 2019.

Dhu was taken to an emergency department where Naderi was working on 02 Aug 2014, complaining of pain in the right lower rib region and was discharged with a recorded diagnosis of "behaviour issues", before returning the following day.

During triage on 03 Aug 2014, Dhu was found to have a rapid pulse,

was dehydrated and was "warm and agitated", and was allocated an Australia Triage Scale (ATS) score of four, meaning she should have been seen within 60 minutes.

However, she was not assessed by Naderi until two hours later.

Naderi performed an ultrasound, which ruled out a collapsed lung, bleeding in her chest and any abdominal pathology.

In his notes following Dhu's second admission, Naderi described her as a "difficult patient to assess" and recorded "withdrawal from drugs" and "behavioural issues", before prescribing benzodiazepine medication and analgesia, and releasing her back to police custody.

Dhu was taken back to the hospital the following day and was unconscious, pulseless and not breathing.

The inquest found Dhu's death was caused by staphylococcal septicaemia and pneumonia with osteomyelitis complicating a previous rib fracture.

Naderi was found to have failed

to meet the standards of care expected of someone with his level of training and experience, and was fined \$30,000, reprimanded and ordered to complete a reflective practice report.

"We will continue, unreservedly, to pursue matters such as these to tribunal to ensure that when someone sees a registered health practitioner, they can trust that they will receive safe, professional care, in all circumstances," AHPRA said.

Double discount shock for pharmacists

INDEPENDENT pharmacy owners in New Plymouth, on New Zealand's North Island, are fearing for their futures, with the arrival of two discount stores.

Vogelton Pharmacy owner, David Fabish, told *stuff.co.nz* that Bargain Chemist and Chemist Warehouse are due to open pharmacies in the city was "a hard pill to swallow".

Fabish warned the rise of discount giants could wipe out existing pharmacies.

"It doesn't make sense why

two would pop up at the same time," he said.

Fabish noted the discounters offer to cover the co-payment on subsidised medicines leaving patients with the perception that other pharmacies are "ripping them off".

"They're doing it for a loss, but they're dangling the carrot to get the foot traffic through the door," he said.

"So they're getting their money from somewhere else to off-set their money from doing scripts, and that's retail."

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