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Today's issue of PD

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

- Storbie
- Sigma Pharmaceuticals

Storbie solutions

E-COMMERCE specialist, Storbie, is offering access to its exclusive Australian Pharmacy Professional Conference (APP) deals from anywhere.

Delegates at APP will be able to call by the company's stand (386) while those unable to attend can livestream Storbie sessions.

See **page five** for more.

Discover Amcal

SIGMA Healthcare is offering pharmacy owners a turn-key solution to transform their store into a destination for expert advice and superior service with its Amcal banner.

To discover more about Amcal's more than 85 years in the Australian market see **page six**.

SA to retain COVID pharmacist laws

PLANS to rollback the South Australian Government's *COVID-19 Emergency Response Act 2020*, will exclude legislation imposing stricter punishments for people who threaten or abuse pharmacy workers.

During the COVID crisis the SA Government amended the *Criminal Law Consolidation Act 1935* "to expand the offences against prescribed emergency workers to include people working in pharmacies and providing pharmacy services".

While other provisions of the emergency legislation will expire, SA Treasurer, Robert Lucas, said retaining the amendments relating to offences against pharmacy workers was "necessary for the ongoing management of the risk of COVID-19 in SA".

"When the COVID Act was first introduced a number of initiatives were needed to support South Australians who were doing it tough and better protect the community," he said.

"Things have changed significantly and there is now no need for many of these measures.

"However we have not yet

returned to a pre-pandemic way of life, and it is necessary to have certain measures in place to assist in the management of the pandemic by the State Co-ordinator and to protect our emergency workers, especially for those who will be administering the vaccine."

A spokesperson for the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) told *Pharmacy Daily* that the retention of the legislation was positive for the profession.

"PSA welcomes the proposed amendments to the SA Criminal Law

Consolidation Act 1935 to provide continued protection to pharmacists and pharmacy workers, whether in a pharmacy premises or wherever they are providing pharmacy services," the spokesperson said.

"Last year, PSA wrote to every state premier and territory chief minister, seeking their support to protect pharmacists and their staff against assault, violence and aggression during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"PSA will continue to advocate for patient and pharmacist safety."

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SR
Pharmacy Business Sales
— Sue Raven —

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LET'S MEET UP!

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No fear of pharmacist prescribers

CONCERNS about pharmacists' capacity to become independent prescribers may be misplaced, the authors of a British study believe.

Research published in the *European Journal of Hospital Pharmacy* by the University of Leeds and the Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust found pharmacist prescribers "make significantly less prescribing errors than doctors".

Pharmacists from one NHS Trust, in areas where a large proportion of prescribing was undertaken by independent pharmacist prescribers, were recruited to collect data over a single week in May 2018.

Data on 5,840 prescription items was recorded, with pharmacists accounting for 1,026 (17.6%) scripts.

Across medical and pharmacist prescribers a total of 479 errors were identified, with the overall error rate for pharmacists being 0.7%, while doctors had an error



rate of 9.8%.

The study noted that experienced independent pharmacist prescribers had a 1% error rate, while those with less experience had a 0% error rate.

"Pharmacists made significantly less prescribing errors than doctors," the authors said.

"85.7% of independent pharmacist prescriber errors were

recorded as minor in significance, compared with an average of 31.7% for all doctor's prescribing errors.

"Actual patient harm occurred from 0.04% of all prescriptions."

The authors concluded that embedding independent pharmacist prescribers with more integrated roles in multidisciplinary teams could improve prescribing practices.

Mackrill to rough it for Vinnies

PHARMACY Guild of Australia Tasmanian Branch Director, Monique Mackrill, will sacrifice home comforts on 17 Jun to raise funds for the more than 116,000 Australians who experience homelessness every night.

In a post published on LinkedIn yesterday, Mackrill said she had committed to taking part in the Vinnies CEO Sleepout in Launceston.

"I want to use this event to raise awareness and much needed funds to help people get back on their feet and have access to a safe roof over their head," she said.

"The worst thing for many people who are homeless is that it starts a vicious cycle into increasing poverty and poorer health."

CLICK HERE to support Mackrill's efforts.

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US moves to vaccinate teens

THE US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has expanded its emergency use authorisation for the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine to include adolescents aged 12 to 15 years.

Acting FDA Commissioner, Janet Woodcock, said the move was “a significant step in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic”, adding that immunising a younger population would bring the country “closer to returning to a sense of normalcy”.

“Parents and guardians can rest assured that the agency undertook a rigorous and thorough review of all available data, as we have with all of our COVID-19 vaccine emergency use authorisations,” she said.

The FDA said adolescents would receive the same dosage and regimen as older patients.

Guild sees pros and cons of vaping

MEASURES making nicotine electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes) Prescription Only products available exclusively through pharmacies from 01 Oct, recognise the public health concerns associated with vaping, the Pharmacy Guild of Australia believes.

However, a Guild spokesperson told *Pharmacy Daily* that the organisation “acknowledges there are benefits as well as risks associated with the use of nicotine”.

“The decision to require a prescription to access nicotine e-cigarettes and nicotine liquids is an important measure to protect consumers, and to assure pharmacists that products being supplied have been assessed for safety and quality,” the spokesperson said.

The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) said the move to restrict access to vaping products would “provide an opportunity for consumers to receive appropriate



medical advice on the use and risks associated with these products”, a view the Guild supports.

“The Guild believes the availability of nicotine containing e-cigarettes on prescription should facilitate access for smoking cessation purposes only,” the spokesperson said.

“As the most frequently visited and accessible primary healthcare destination in Australia - community pharmacies will play an

important role in patients accessing these products when they become available.”

With no e-cigarettes currently included on the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods (ARTG), patients will only be able to access them through the Authorised Prescriber Scheme, or the Special Access Scheme.

CLICK HERE for the latest information about e-cigarettes for pharmacists from the TGA.

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Dispensary Corner

DESPITE specialist training and warnings that COVID-19 vaccines come in multi-dose vials, an Italian nurse has administered the equivalent of six doses into a 23-year-old student's arm.

The incident, which occurred in Tuscany on Sun, was reported to Italy's medicine regulator and comes on the back of similar overdoses here in Australia, the US, Germany and Israel, where patients inadvertently received four doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine, while a staff member at the Singapore National Eye Centre gave a person the equivalent of five doses of the jab.

News agency *AGI* reported that the patient was in good condition after receiving fluids and paracetamol, with the mistake being attributed to human error resulting from a communication failure among members of the vaccination team.

While vaccine overdoses are not believed to be harmful, experts believe it can cause common side effects, such as fever and aches, to be amplified.



Smirk best in the West

PERTH-BASED Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) Clinical Advisor Pharmacy, Richard Smirk, has been named the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia's (PSA's) Western Australia Branch Pharmacist of the Year (PotY).

Presenting the award at the PSA's WA Annual Therapeutic Update conference last week, PSA WA Branch President, Dr Fei Sim, hailed Smirk's dedication to the profession over the last 40 years.

"Richard has given so much to the profession since 1981 and has never asked for recognition or recompense," Sim said.

"The enormous volume of work he has produced and his wide scope of practice deserves acknowledgement.

"He has devoted so much of his time and energy to improving the processes around registration of pharmacists, examining intern pharmacists and framing the governance around the WA Pharmacy Students' Association's restructure.

"We owe him a debt of gratitude."

The PSA also recognised University of WA Director of Pharmacy and Head of School

(Allied Health), Professor Rhonda Clifford, with the organisation's Lifetime Achievement Award, while general practice pharmacist, Kate Fulford, was named as the PSA WA's Early Career Pharmacist of the Year, with Ashtyn Pitts taking the Intern of the Year title.

Sim noted that the four award winners had all gone above and beyond for their patients and colleagues during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"As pharmacists and frontline health professionals, our routines have been altered and many changes have been made in the last year," Sim said.

"Our profession has shone during these difficult times and we can add the words 'resilient', 'excellence' and 'collaborative' to our expertise.

"The winners of this year's WA PSA awards have all demonstrated PSA's vision and excellence. Whether it was empowering pharmacists to be more responsible for medicine safety, demonstrating working collaboratively within a healthcare team, or providing support and education to the next generation of pharmacists."

Guild Update

CALD medicines fact sheets

TO HELP culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities have better access to important information about medicines, NPS MedicineWise has created a consumer fact sheet on active ingredients available in English and 10 additional languages.

GPs, nurses, pharmacists, other health professionals and carers who work with people who read Arabic, Simplified Chinese, Traditional Chinese, Greek, Hindi, Italian, Punjabi, Spanish, Tagalog and Vietnamese are encouraged to download the fact sheet to help people understand why the information on their prescription now looks different.

Research has found that people from CALD backgrounds experience higher rates of adverse outcomes from poor medication management, including medication related hospital admissions.

People from CALD backgrounds often find information related to their medicines complex and overwhelming, in part because there is a lack of translated materials to support the safe use of medicines.

The fact sheets are available [here](#).

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