

# MENOPAUSE

## *for a new generation*

**DATE:** Wednesday Nov 17<sup>th</sup> 2021

**TIME:** 6 – 7:15 pm AEDT

- Prescribing protocols for menopausal patients
- Advancements in research & insights
- Interactive Q & A with experienced clinicians



**Professor Petra Stute**, head of  
Gynecological Endocrinology &  
Menopause centre in Switzerland



**Sandra Vilella**, Leading  
Australian Naturopath,  
Herbalist & lecturer

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## AMA makes ownership reform push

**AUSTRALIA** needs to “restart the discussion about who can own pharmacies, and where they are located,” Australian Medical Association (AMA) President, Dr Omar Khorshid, believes.

Outlining the AMA’s latest vision for the future of the provision of healthcare, Khorshid described the pharmacy ownership rules as “undeniably anticompetitive” and called for limits on dispensing to be changed to allow patients to receive 90-day supplies of prescription medications.

“The AMA earlier this year launched its *Vision for Australia’s Health*, which outlines a blueprint for the future of the Australian healthcare system that is based on the core principles of access, sustainability and patient empowerment that is led by medical practitioners,” he said.

“To that end, a good starting point is to consider three simple questions: how, where and why do we dispense medicines in Australia?”

“Pharmacists have and will continue to have a critical role in the provision of health care in



Australia, and we want to ensure we are making the best use of our highly-trained pharmacist workforce.

“We need to separate out issues around the business of owning pharmacies, as opposed to the role of pharmacists in general, and to restart the discussion about who can own pharmacies, and where they are located.”

Khorshid said the current restrictions on pharmacy ownership were fuelling increased out-of-pocket expenses for patients and were “punitive to rural and remote Australians, because they have less

competition with [the] restrictive location rules”.

The AMA President said that while the organisation did not endorse a specific model of care, it believed the Federal Government should take immediate steps “to allow pharmacies to dispense up to three months of medicines for patient convenience if a doctor deemed it was safe”.

He added that the rollout of electronic prescriptions during the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated health professionals’ ability to “make changes quickly and successfully to our health system”.

## Menopause Q&A

**INTEGRATIVE** medicine specialist, Flordis, will host a free webinar focused on supporting menopausal patients on 17 Nov.

The event will include information about prescribing protocols, advancements in research and an interactive Q&A session with experienced clinicians.

See **cover page** for more.

## PharmX solutions

**ELECTRONIC** stock management and invoicing platform, PharmX, is aiming to help free up pharmacists’ time to focus on delivering better healthcare outcomes.

See **page four** for more.

## MDR forecasts ‘customer agreement’

**MEDICATION** management platform, MedAdvisor (MDR) is expecting to announce a possible new customer agreement in the coming days.

The Australian Securities Exchange (ASX) listed business requested an immediate trading halt this morning “to facilitate the orderly market in the company’s securities pending the release of an announcement regarding a customer agreement”.

“The company considers that

an ASX trading halt is necessary as otherwise trading in the company’s securities would continue on an uninformed basis,” MDR said.

“The company expects that the ASX announcement about the customer agreement will be made as soon as possible, and in any event, prior to the commencement of trade on Wed 03 Nov.

“The company is not aware of any reason why the trading halt should not be granted.”

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**STORBIE**

## Today's issue of PD

**Pharmacy Daily** today features three pages of news plus a front cover page from **Flordis** and a full page from **PharmX**.



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## Guild opens IoTY nominations

**NOMINATIONS** for the 2021 MIMS/Pharmacy Guild of Australia Intern of the Year Award (IoTY) are now open.

The national award supports the next generation of pharmacists to build a strong foundation for their professional careers, with the winner receiving a travel and educational scholarship to the value of \$4,500.

Using an "updated and simplified online system", nominees will be asked to respond to just one question - "in 50 words or less tell us why you deserve to be IoTY?".

The nomination process will run until 31 Jan 2022, with the winner to be announced at the Australian Pharmacy Professional Conference in Mar.

## PSA calls for permanent CD measures

**MEASURES** authorising pharmacists to dispense a month's supply of Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) medication to a patient with a prescription in emergency circumstances should be made permanent, the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) believes.

The PSA's call follows the latest extension of emergency Continued Dispensing (CD) measures until 30 Jun 2022, announced by the Federal Government following a meeting of National Cabinet on Fri.

Welcoming the move, PSA National President, Associate Professor Chris Freeman, called on the Government to implement CD arrangements permanently.

"It is reassuring to hear that this commonsense measure has been extended, but given that this is the fifth extension since it was introduced for the 2020 bushfires,



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why not just make it permanent?" he said.

"The success of these measures has been clearly demonstrated throughout the pandemic, 360,000 Australians have been able to access their vital medicines in an emergency in the past 20 months.

"That is more than 360,000 people whose health has not suffered from being stuck without the medicines they need for their health and wellbeing.

"Being able to access PBS subsidy for emergency supply of medicines is vital to ensuring patients are not hit with out-of-pocket costs during some of their most vulnerable moments.

"Whether it be a pandemic, flood, bushfire, cyclone or a family tragedy – providing Australians with confidence that they can access their essential medicines should disaster strike is essential.



"As we approach summer, Australia's natural disaster season, these measures are particularly important."

The PSA noted that under the extension pharmacists in most States and Territories will automatically have legal authority to use their clinical and professional judgement when it comes to dispensing emergency supplies of PBS medicines to patients, those practising in NSW and Victoria will need to wait for local health orders to be updated.

## Tea-towel bandit hits SA pharmacy

**SOUTH** Australian police are hunting a Caucasian male who held-up an Adelaide pharmacy.

The bandit allegedly entered the store armed with a firearm and demanded cash during a morning raid, yesterday.

Police reported that pharmacy staff handed over "a small amount of money", before the robber fled the scene on foot.

The suspect has been described as "being of Caucasian appearance, approximately 188cm tall with a slim build".



"He was wearing a beige coloured hooded jumper with a tea-towel over his face, dark grey pants and black shoes," SA Police said.

"He was in possession of a black cross body bag that contained a possible firearm."

## Push to unlock potential of biosimilars

**THE** International Generic and Biosimilar Medicines Association (IGBA) is calling on stakeholders to "join the biosimilars movement on advancing access", as part of its second annual Global Biosimilars Week.

The campaign, which starts today, aims to encourage governments to establish worldwide biosimilar policies to deliver better outcomes for patients and improve access to biologic medications.

"The COVID-19 global health

crisis has led governments and the entire healthcare community to rethink and rebuild healthcare systems," IGBA Chair, Sudarshan Jain said.

"Now is a time to reconcile the unique opportunity provided by the availability of biosimilar medicines and the rising challenges for many patients around the world to access quality-assured transformative therapies."

Jain said biosimilars would help improve patient outcomes.

## ARTHRO-AID DIRECT RANGE

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## Dispensary Corner

**WE THOUGHT** the dark days of the pandemic were behind us, but clearly some elements remain - apparently including a somewhat irrational desire to hoard toilet paper.

The Kansas City Police Department in the US is attempting to identify a man who held up a CVS pharmacy at gunpoint and stole a crap-load of the bathroom essential.

The incident in question occurred in Aug, with officers now appealing for public assistance to identify the perpetrator by posting a video.

According to a police report, the person seen in the security footage walked into the pharmacy and allegedly filled his shopping cart with "over \$100 worth of Babo brand toilet paper" before approaching the checkout to pay.

However his credit card payment was declined, at which point he headed straight for the exit with the goods still piled high in his trolley.

When a pharmacy employee asked him to stop, he pulled out a gun and said "you don't want to do this".

It appears that identification of the toilet roll bandit has been made somewhat difficult because he was wearing a mask which had been conveniently mandated by state authorities to protect against COVID-19.

However the official description is of a "nicely dressed, elderly black man with limited use of his left arm," with the suspect leaving the scene in a small, dark-coloured sedan.

## Guild makes CTG plea

**PHARMACISTS** across Australia are being urged to proactively contact prescribers to register patients for the Closing the Gap (CTG) Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) co-payment when they get warning codes.

Speaking during a webinar last Wed, Pharmacy Guild of Australia Community Pharmacies for Rural and Indigenous Australia Advisory Group Chair, Simon Blacker, said it was essential that pharmacists act on PBS Online warnings to avoid eligible patients having to pay for medications that would otherwise be fully subsidised.

Blacker noted that pharmacies are unable to register patients with the centralised system, with the Federal Department of Health agreeing to have unregistered claims come up as "warnings" rather than "rejections" until 01 Feb 2022.

"We need to make sure as you get those PBS warning codes that the CTG registration is not done correctly, or it hasn't happened, you need to follow up with the prescriber to make sure that

patient is registered as a matter of urgency," he said.

"As we hit Dec, the Christmas period and into Jan, who know what will happen with COVID and vaccinations in that time - you don't need to leave it to the last minute [to ensure patients are registered], it's just not appropriate.

"The priority should be 'let's contact the prescriber and the this resolved."

Blacker added that the Guild wanted the Government to review issues around Continued Dispensing and CTG, noting that pharmacists are currently unable to dispense PBS medications in line with emergency supply arrangements under the program.

"It is the Guild's policy that all PBS prescriptions should be eligible for CTG and we're advocating in that space," he said.

"We all have enjoyed the ability to use Continued Dispensing whilst it's been broadened and we'd like to see that continue, and there is no reason that CTG shouldn't be allowed access to that service as appropriate."

## TGA moves to boost access to HIV tests

**COMMUNITY** pharmacies will be among the businesses and organisations authorised to supply HIV self-tests, following changes to conditions which limited their supply.

Announcing the approval of the Atomo HIV Self-Test, the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) changes, which came into effect from 22 Oct, were designed to improve the accessibility of HIV testing.

"It is now easier for Atomo to supply their HIV Self Test through

online purchases, over-the-counter sales in pharmacies and to other relevant businesses, organisations and institutions that work with HIV at-risk communities," the TGA said.

"Pharmacies and other organisations that supply the Atomo HIV Self-Test must have information available to ensure individuals can perform the test correctly and interpret the test result accurately."

**CLICK HERE** to find out more about the changed conditions.



## Weekly Comment

Welcome to Pharmacy Daily's weekly comment feature. This week's contributor is **Mignon Hill, 2021 SA Pharmacy Assistant of the Year at TerryWhite Chemmart Melbourne Street, SA.**



### TerryWhite Chemmart Academy Live is an experience like no other

**ACADEMY** Live is a day where TerryWhite Chemmart pharmacy assistants from across the state come together to learn, engage, and network.

It's both a fun and educational day which sees supplier representatives training on products and the TerryWhite Chemmart operations team presenting on up-and-coming signature campaigns as well as conducting team building exercises (which are always entertaining). I always feel so empowered after an Academy Live session and eager to take my newfound knowledge back to my team to implement in store.

The networking element is just as important though. At Academy Live we are encouraged to work in groups with assistants from other pharmacies enabling many new friendships to be formed. These new connections have helped me on many occasions to reach out to pharmacy assistants to collaborate with them when needed, enabling myself and the team to provide better service and care for our customers.

Academy Live truly is an event like no other. It plays an important role in helping pharmacy assistants learn and be inspired to be the best they possibly can. It also instils us with the knowledge to care for and support our customers to the best of our abilities.



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