

Pharmacists jab FNQ students



COMMUNITY pharmacists delivered the first doses of COVID-19 on site to students at St Monica's College in Cairns, Queensland this week, as part of the Far North Queensland (FNQ) COVID-19 School Vaccination Program.

Similar to other school-based vaccine programs, the scheme will deliver "thousands of Moderna COVID-19 vaccines to students across FNQ in the coming months," according to Pharmacy Guild National President Trent Twomey, who took part in the launch.

Also at the event (pictured) were local Member for Leichhardt, Warren Entsch and Chair of the North Queensland Primary Health Network, Nick Loukas.

Twomey said there had been strong levels of registrations for the program, and hinted that a successful rollout could see it replicated in other regions.

"Community pharmacists are one of the most trusted professions and clearly there is great confidence in the Moderna vaccine and the primary health care professionals administering it," he said.

"It is exciting for Queensland schools to be at the tip of the spear in the fight against COVID-19, and

if we see continued strong appetite for this program, we would love to see it replicated in other states and territories in the future."

He also endorsed legislative changes allowing community pharmacists to expand their services to onsite school vaccination clinics, with such an initiative likely to bring protection to an age group that can be particularly hard to reach.

"Providing greater access to vaccination services for young Australians has been a focus area for community pharmacies...this innovative program empowers community pharmacists to deliver world-class primary health care to school-aged patients in a safe and accessible way," Twomey enthused.

The program was developed by the Pharmacy Guild of Australia, Queensland Branch, and is supported by the Queensland Department of Health.

As with other programs for children, parental or guardian approval for the scheme was captured in advance, while health assessments were also undertaken for participating students to give both the vaccinator and their patient the assurances required for vaccination to proceed.



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Guild digest out

THE 2021 edition of the Pharmacy Guild of Australia's annual Guild Digest snapshot of pharmacy operations in Australia over the last 12 months has been released.

The document is a financial benchmarking tool for owners, managers and financial advisors, and is also used by banks and brokers to assist with pharmacy valuations.

The Digest is free to members, and can also be purchased via guild.nat@guild.org.au.

Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features four pages of news including a special feature from Omnicell.

Pharmacy future

THE Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia has partnered with Omnicell to produce The Australian Pharmacy Forecast 2021 report which will "help shape the future of pharmacy in Australia - see page three.

3-WAY ACTION TO HELP EXTINGUISH INFLAMED FUNGAL SKIN INFECTIONS

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ANTI INFLAMMATORY

HYDROCORTISONE 1% w/w
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MICONAZOLE NITRATE 2% w/w
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Resolve Plus 1.0
Miconazole Nitrate 2% w/w, Hydrocortisone 1% w/w cream, 30g

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Review full PI before recommending or supplying Resolve Plus 1.0. PI available on request from Ego Pharmaceuticals.

References: 1. Resolve Plus Product Information. Date of Most Recent Amendment 26 October 2018. 2. Van Cutsem JM, Thienpont D. Miconazole, a broad-spectrum antimycotic agent with antibacterial activity. *Chemotherapy* 1972;17:392-404.






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Gold X+Afterpay

THE Pharmacy Guild's Gold Cross Products & Services has endorsed Afterpay, with the move giving Guild Members the ability to offer the buy now, pay later payments platform.

Gold Cross GM Jason Rose said the deal would help pharmacies grow their business and benefit from an exclusive member rate.

"Afterpay does this by charging the pharmacy a competitive rate, rather than the customer, to enable them to offer Afterpay.

Customers who use Afterpay in pharmacy or online can "enjoy the benefits of splitting their medicine and pharmacy purchases into four, fortnightly instalments, always interest free."

Rose said the Afterpay deal was helping "break down the economic barrier to healthcare...Afterpay is about providing families and singles in the community with choice in how and when they pay for their pharmacy purchases, in a way that works with their overall budget," he added.

Afterpay is not new to the pharmacy sector, with several chains having offered the payment option for some time including TerryWhite Chemmart (PD 18 Sep 2019) and Priceline (PD 19 Nov 2020) as well as Blooms the Chemist, Wizard Pharmacy, Direct Chemist Outlet and Chemist Warehouse networks.

Lockdowns drive e-script growth

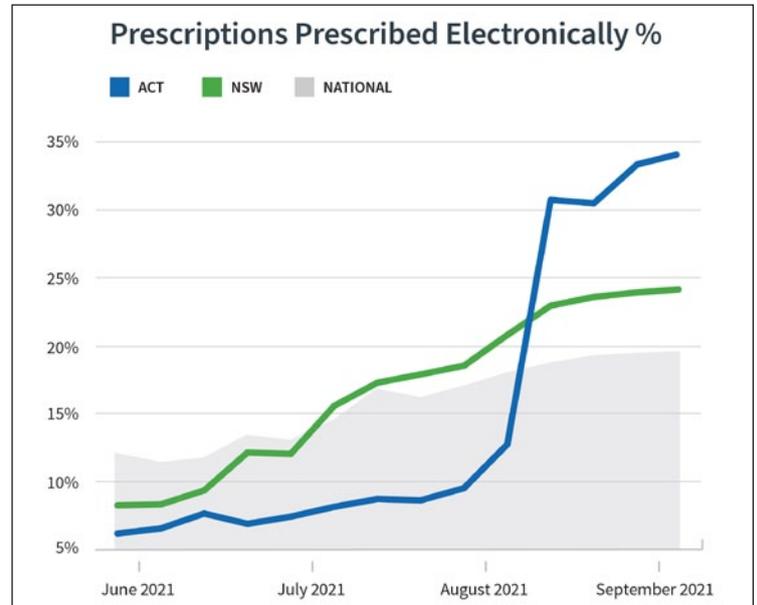
ERX Script Exchange has announced the milestone of 20 million electronic prescriptions since Australia launched e-scripts just 15 months ago, with strong demand due to pharmacies and patients seeking remote and contactless options for medication supply during lockdown.

Paul Naismith, CEO of eRx parent firm Fred IT, said the innovation had been key to help adapt to the challenges posed by COVID-19.

"Electronic prescriptions have played a key role in helping pharmacies manage practical issues around lockdown and social distancing, including reducing the potential time that patients are waiting in-store and the number of people in-store at any one time," Naismith said.

He also noted that patients had become more digitally capable during COVID-19, and this was also driving change in how they connect with pharmacies.

"In the past week, 14,000 patients pre-ordered electronic scripts through the MedView Flow network, which means they ordered from home or elsewhere before coming in to collect their medicine," Naismith noted.



"The vast majority of these thousands of pre-ordered prescriptions are click-and-collect, although delivery services are growing," he added.

While pre-ordered scripts had long been possible, the removal of the need for the paper prescription follow-up had substantially streamlined the process.

Naismith also highlighted the new "How can I get this prescription

dispensed?" button on eRx digital tokens.

The MedView Flow network now has 2,600 participating pharmacies, receiving script orders directly into the dispensary from a range of sources including MedView Patient Connect, medication management apps such as MedAdvisor, Medmate and myPharmacy Link, and even via WhatsApp from patients' individual My Script List.

5-11 Pfizer tick

THE TGA has granted a provisional determination to Pfizer, allowing it to make an application to vary its approval for the Comirnaty COVID-19 jab for use in kids aged 5-11.

FIP releases women in pharmacy toolkit

THE International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) has launched a new toolkit for "Positive Practice Environments for Women in Science and Education," raising awareness of five key areas needing attention.

Topics include equal incentives for equal work; work-life balance; creating supportive and safe working environments; opportunities for professional development, recognition and empowerment; and women in leadership.

Developed by the FIP Women in Science and Education (FIPWISE) Enabling Workplaces Working Group, the document builds on the organisation's collaboration with the World Health Professions Alliance to ensure

positive practice environments for healthcare professionals.

"We see women making an extraordinary contribution to global health, but not yet being rewarded equally with men in pay, leadership or career progression," said FIP CEO Catherine Duggan.

"By creating and managing positive practice environments we can help women to achieve their full potential in all sectors...when an environment is supportive, enabling and collaborative, we can all thrive," she said.

Complete with an analysis of the issues, possible solutions for workplaces and a series of case studies, the new toolkit is now available at fip.org.

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Empowering pharmacy leaders



THE Australian Pharmacy Forecast 2021, published in June of this year, was developed by the Society of Hospital Pharmacists Australia (SHPA), with the support of Omnicell, to help pharmacy leaders make informed plans for the future.

“Omnicell is proud to support SHPA in this annual report to provide Australia’s pharmacy executives with strategic direction for pharmacy practice so they can navigate the changing healthcare landscape,” said Omnicell’s International General Manager Sara Dalmasso.

“We want to support pharmacists with the best practices and latest thinking around innovation and the need to adapt. Following the fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic, this has never been more important.”

Russell Levy, Chair of the SHPA Pharmacy Forecast Advisory Committee, said, “It’s vital that we start discussing what strategies we need for our hospitals to become smarter after a very difficult period for healthcare. There is a wealth of knowledge in Australia and

it is important we harness that information and expertise and share it. The support we have had from Omnicell has helped us to create what will be a very valuable tool when it comes to shaping the future of pharmacy in Australia.”

To read the report **CLICK HERE**.

The electronic revolution

THE introduction of computers into hospital pharmacies revolutionised pharmacy practice, and the Australian Pharmacy Forecast report confirmed the electronic revolution is still underway.

Electronic Medical Management (EMM) systems are being increasingly adopted by hospitals, predominately in NSW and QLD,

with estimates of around 30% of hospitals in 2020 having an EMM, and the expectation that this will grow to 50% in the next five years.

The adoption of electronic health records at an institution means an EMM is important to avoid the inherent risks around ‘hybrid’ medical records, and the Forecast recommends the adoption of EMMs as a solution.

Automated dispensing benefits



have implemented automated dispensing cabinets by 2026. The use of automated dispensing systems was found to have a number of benefits.

Automated dispensing cabinets reduce the likelihood of medication selection errors by directing clinical staff to the correct product.

The chances of inadvertently retrieving the wrong strength of a preparation, or making a common error related to similarly named yet different medicines is markedly reduced.

It’s a step towards improving medication safety, and reducing medication-related harm.

THE Australian Pharmacy Forecast 2021 panellists were hopeful that 25% of hospitals will



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COVAX domination: Twomey

WITH more than one million doses of COVID-19 vaccines (COVAX) administered through community pharmacies in Australia, Pharmacy Guild of Australia National President, Trent Twomey, believes it is a service the sector will dominate in years to come.

Speaking during a special pharmacy industry webinar hosted by the Commonwealth Bank of Australia last night (PD 08 Oct), Twomey said the sector had “completely overthought” the COVAX rollout.

“They’re not that different to administering a flu vaccine,” the Guild President said.

“Sure, we have to have a longer conversation with people because we’ve botched up the messaging as a country, but we have completely overthought how complicated administering a COVAX is.

“I know, as we passed the one million mark...it’s a sector we will dominate in the future.

“What you’ll find throughout the course of 2022 and beyond, [is] the

demand for the vaccine won’t be as lumpy, it’ll be smoother and over the course of many months - so the mad rush that we saw in the last 12 weeks will be spread over a longer period of time.

“[That] should make it easier to absorb into our business as usual functions, but we need to systemise it,” he said.

While Twomey told attendees at the webinar that he was confident that community pharmacy would be integral to the COVAX rollout going forward, he raised concerns about the Federal Department of Health’s communications surrounding booster shots.

“Unfortunately the communication out of the Department of Health in the last week has been just as clear and concise as their communication was in the initial rollout,” he said.

“You can see that the good Lieutenant-General [John Frewen] has handed it back to the Health Department, because we’re balling it up all over again.”

IVF merger blocked by ACCC

THE Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) has filed proceedings in the Federal Court seeking an urgent injunction to stop the proposed acquisition of Adora Fertility by Virtus Health.

Both Virtus and Adora are leading providers of IVF services, operating fertility clinics in Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne.

On 30 Aug Virtus advised the Commission of its intention to acquire Adora from Healius, with the Commission saying it provided “very limited information” about the deal.

A public review of the transaction was commenced on 21 Sep, but last week the companies notified the ACCC that they intended to complete the transaction this Fri, even though the review is not yet complete.

“The parties have shown complete disregard for the usual merger assessment processes in Australia,” said ACCC Chair Rod Sims.



Dispensary Corner

WE ALL really want to get away from the relentless bad waves of COVID-19 news, but perhaps not to this extreme.

Two men from the Solomon Islands have survived 29 days lost at sea, telling their rescuers “I guess it was a nice break from everything”.

The pair set out from remote Mono Island on a planned 200km boat trip to Noro on New Georgia Island, but after encountering heavy rain and strong winds lost sight of the coastline they were following.

Their 23-foot boat had a 60 horsepower outboard engine, and should have taken a day or two to make the journey.

But “when the bad weather came, it was bad, but it was worse and became scary when the GPS died,” said one of the survivors, Liva Nanjikana.

“We couldn’t see where we were going and so we just decided to stop the engine and wait, to save fuel”.

The pair ended up floating about 400km towards Papua New Guinea, surviving on a few oranges they had packed for the trip, coconuts collected from the sea and seawater trapped using a piece of canvas.

They were so weak that when they arrived in the PNG town of Pomio a month later they had to be carried off the boat.

Despite the trauma, Nanjikana said he took away some positive elements from the experience.

“I had no idea what was going on while I was out there.

“I didn’t hear about COVID or anything else,” he said.

Sanitiser revision

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration’s Advisory Committee on Medicines and Chemicals Scheduling has made an interim decision to create a new definition of hand sanitisers, incorporating a new Schedule 10 entry for products containing more than 5 per cent methanol.

The Committee recommended an implementation date of 01 Feb 2022 for the change - more at [tga.gov.au](https://www.tga.gov.au).

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