

Today's issue of PD

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

- Willach
- TerryWhite Chemmart

Cultural safety

PHARMACY Guild of Australia National President, Trent Twomey, is set to join a panel discussion focused on cultural safety.

The webinar, hosted by Australian Pharmacy Council (APC), will look at what is currently being done in pharmacy education to improve health outcomes for First Nations peoples.

The event will take place at 12pm (AEDT) on 28 Oct, and is the third in the APC's four-part series on cultural safety in pharmacy education.

CLICK HERE to register or listen to previous webinars.

Docs focused on turf not women: PSA

MEDICAL lobby groups appear to be more concerned about protecting their patch than improving Australian women's access to oral contraceptives, Pharmaceutical Society of Australia National President, Associate Professor Chris Freeman believes.

Freeman described the Therapeutic Goods Administration's (TGA's) Advisory Committee on Medicines Scheduling (ACMS) interim decision to retain the current Prescription-Only status for oral contraceptives (**PD 19 Oct**), as "very disappointing".

The PSA President noted that throughout the COVID-19 pandemic pharmacists had proven their capacity to safely dispense oral contraceptives without a prescription under Continued Dispensing arrangements.

"We will be responding to the TGA to reconsider their position before making a final decision," he said.

"The benefits of improved access to oral contraception are clear.

"Well-established models exist overseas, where pharmacists can provide the medicine once it has previously been prescribed.

"Predictably, the Australian doctors' lobby groups are more worried about 'protecting their own turf', than providing women with timely, cheaper and safe access to contraception.

"The public are sick of it.

"The Australian Medical Association (AMA) doesn't bat an eyelid when it comes to fringe online prescription services but are comfortable in restricting access for Australian pharmacists.

"We have already seen the success of continued dispensing of oral contraceptives through the pandemic, and internationally, there are well-established models which demonstrate the success of pharmacists' role in this process."

PSA Contemporary Community Pharmacy Practice Community of Specialty Interest Chair, Dr Fei Sim, said opposition to down-scheduling

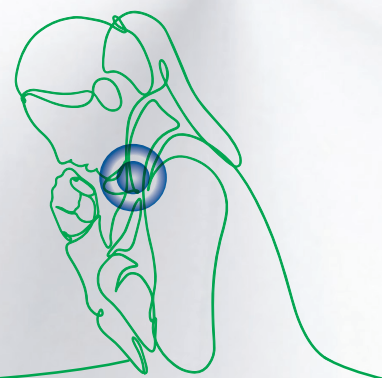


the Pill to Pharmacist-Only implied the AMA and the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners were "advocating to restrict women's access".

"When it comes to contraception, it is imperative that we have a patient-centric approach, one that Australian women need and deserve," she said.

"The same rhetoric we saw in the initial stages of pharmacists providing immunisations has now resurfaced, whereby, doctors' groups advocated against immunisations being administered by pharmacists for the same hollow reason they want to restrict access to contraception."

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Tomahawk bandit appeals sentence

A QUEENSLAND man who assaulted pharmacy staff during an armed robbery in Mar 2020, has successfully appealed his four-year prison sentence.

Joshua Thomas William Watson pleaded guilty to armed robbery and common assault, which took place at TerryWhite Chemmart Belgian Gardens on 09 Mar 2020, while carrying a tomahawk in a shopping bag (PD 18 May).

The Supreme Court of Queensland issued orders yesterday that "the sentence imposed in respect to the count of armed robbery is varied by setting aside the order that the applicant [Watson] be eligible for parole on 12 May 2021 and suspending the sentence of four years forthwith for an operational period to expire on 09 Mar 2024".

During the initial sentencing at Townsville District Court earlier this year, Judge Gregory Lynham, said Watson was "out to get caught" and had a "desire" to return to prison, having served a three-year



sentence after being convicted of 15 crimes, including breaking into the Cooloola Chemist three times in a single night on 16 Jul 2016, and using his five-year-old daughter as a lookout.

Court papers noted that Watson had threatened to hurt a 23-year-old female pharmacist during the robbery, ordering her to fill a bag with prescription medications, and warning that things would "get messy" if she did not comply.

Watson assaulted a pharmacy assistant during the raid, but did

not remove the tomahawk from the bag, before escaping by car.

Watson was arrested a short time later and made a "full and frank confession", the Court heard.

The 38-year-old told police that he had acted as "unaggressively as possible" during the incident.

"I didn't want to traumatise people or anything," he said.

Issuing the new orders the Court noted that Watson has served a total of 19 months imprisonment.

TGA backs RATs

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has approved six COVID-19 rapid antigen tests (RATs) for home testing from 01 Nov.

The approved RATs include three sponsored by AM Diagnostics, and one each from Hough Pharma, Medsupply Australia and Roche Diagnostics Australia.

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Dispensary Corner

FEDERAL MP and proponent of numerous unproven COVID-19 cures, Craig Kelly, is attracting the ire of pharmacists after posting that the profession was cashing in on the COVID vaccination rollout.

In a tweet littered with syringe emojis the cross-bench politician suggested doctors, pharmacists and "big pharma" were "all in it together - financially tied to [the vaccine] gives them a vested interest".

Responding to Kelly's latest musing, Pharmacy Guild of Australia Victorian Branch President, Anthony Tassone, noted the fees paid to pharmacies for administering the vaccines "barely covers costs", adding that "on weekends we lose money".

"It literally is a community service," Tassone tweeted.

Former Pharmaceutical Society of Australia National President and CEO, Shane Jackson, added - "if anyone thinks we are 'making money' out of this, they are delusional".

In the same Twitter thread, former Australian Medical Association President, Dr Mukesh Haikerwal, told Tassone, "you can't have a reasonable rational argument in these circumstances, #flatEarth #ConspiracyTheories are always unmovable".

"The good news [is] most citizens have voted with their arms," Haikerwal said.

We suspect Haikerwal is right - some people just don't want to listen to reason.

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