

Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features three pages of news.

Respiratory care joins PSA CSIs

THE Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) has announced its fourth Community of Specialty Interest (CSI) will be focused on respiratory care and chaired by Professor Sinthia Bosnic-Anticevich.

Initially the group will be focused on the current status of asthma management in pharmacy.

"The Respiratory CSI will bring together pharmacists across the spectrum of practice, from research, education, and advocacy," Bosnic-Anticevich said.

"This CSI will ensure that practice-based initiatives for respiratory care are developed and enabled by pharmacists for pharmacists."

She added that the CSI would also provide pharmacists with the opportunity to develop leadership skills.

Rego fees on the rise

PHARMACISTS' professional registration fees for the 2021/22 year are on the rise, while a number of other Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) regulated professions have seen fees frozen or cut.

The indexed 3% fee hike will cost pharmacists renewing their general registration, \$433 - a \$13 increase on the 2020/21 rates - while those whose principal place of practice is NSW will be charged \$507, which includes a \$74 contribution to the Pharmacy Council of NSW.

Announcing the fee increase, Board Chair, Brett Simmonds, said the regulatory body was committed to keeping the fee as low as possible, while ensuring it has sufficient income to carry out its duties and protect the public.

Simmonds said the Board acknowledged the efforts pharmacists have made throughout the COVID-19 pandemic to support their communities.

"We thank the profession for the significant effort in providing frontline services for the public during these very difficult times," he said.

The Board said that pharmacists adversely impacted by lockdowns



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may be eligible to access AHPRA's registration and renewal fee payment plan.

Of the 15 AHPRA regulated professions, registration fees have been increased for seven, with pharmacy, medicine, occupational therapy, optometry, osteopathy and physiotherapy boards' fees increasing by 3%, while the Dental Board of Australia limited its increase to 2.5%.

Fees were frozen for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island health practitioners, podiatrists, chiropractors, nurses and midwives, medial radiologists and Chinese medicine practitioners, with paramedics seeing their fees cut by 4.25%, and psychologists' registration costs falling again after last year's 10% cut.



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PHARMACY SOFTWARE

Guild builds case for co-payment cut

CUTTING out-of-pocket costs for patients will be the key issue the Pharmacy Guild of Australia will urge political parties to back in the run up to the next Federal election, the organisation's Executive Director, Suzanne Greenwood, says.

Speaking during the first of the Australian Friendly Societies Pharmacies Association (AFSPA) Webinar Series events on Mon, Greenwood reiterated calls made last week by Guild National President, Trent Twomey, for the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) general co-payment of \$41.30 to be halved (**PD** 10 Sep).

"During the Seventh Community Pharmacy Agreement (7CPA) negotiations we were putting forward to the Government what we called at the time our Universal Access package, and it was around that universality of healthcare - trying to make things more affordable - [but] the Government clearly had no appetite, no interest for exploring that at the time," she said.

"So we reshaped things into what we now call our Affordable Medicines Reform (AMR) package, [and] unfortunately, I would feel



it's fair to say the Government does not have a strong appetite for it.

"We are therefore needing to do a lot of work to establish the case for change and [to] establish why this is an imperative that the Government needs to pay attention to.

"Obviously this period from now through to when the election is called is a critical period for our advocacy.

"We have our AMR campaign internally, which covers all aspects from stakeholder engagement to

surveying, getting information, that research, so we've got the data to support what we're putting forward."

Greenwood noted that the Guild was continuing to engage with all sides of politics as it seeks to secure a cut to the PBS co-payment.

"It's probably fair to say that the opposition has a much stronger appetite for medicines affordability as a policy," she said.

"But that doesn't mean we're going to stop talking to the Coalition any time soon."

Pharmacies see Moderna surge

PHARMACIES across the country are seeing a surge in demand for COVID-19 vaccine appointments ahead of the rollout of the Moderna shot next week.

Newcastle pharmacy owner, Anthony Piggott, told *ABC News* that his store's "phone does not stop ringing" since the Moderna rollout was announced last week (**PD** 09 Sep) and urged patients to book online.

"I'll be getting 700 doses between my pharmacies, but my demand is much larger than that," he said.

"It's probably more than 5,000 people at the moment.

"I need to work out how I can ration this out, because this will go on for weeks... I am buried under vaccine enquiries."



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Pharmacy worker facing fraud charges

A QUEENSLAND-BASED pharmacy worker will face multiple fraud charges at Brisbane Magistrates Court later this month.

The 43-year-old man from Hamilton is facing allegations that he created a fake patient profile and prescribed a quantity of medication for his personal use between 23 and 26 Feb, while employed at a pharmacy in Palm Cove.

Queensland Police arrested the man earlier this month and charged him with four counts of fraud, three counts of possessing a dangerous drug, five counts of unlawful possession of a controlled drug and one count of creating a false entry record.

Meanwhile, police on Queensland's Sunshine Coast are



seeking assistance in helping to track down an armed robbery who held up the Caloundra Chempro Chemist pharmacy on 02 Sep.

Police reported that the bandit threatened a male pharmacist with a knife during the raid and demanded money.

A staff member told local media outlets that the pharmacist was not injured during the incident, and there were no other customers in the store at the time.



Dispensary Corner

IF THERE'S one lesson to be learnt from the coverage of the Met Gala Ball, it's if you've got a health issue you do not want the world to know about, don't tell Nicki Minaj's cousin.

The Trinidad-born rapper attracted media attention after skipping the Met Gala, which required attendees to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 and provide proof of a negative test, as she did not want to leave her 11-month-old child at home while she travelled to New York.

However, it was a tweet posted about her cousin's vaccine hesitancy that caught the imagination of the world's press - Dispensary Corner included.

"My cousin in Trinidad won't get the vaccine cuz his friend got it and became impotent," Minaj revealed.

"His testicles became swollen.

"His friend was weeks away from getting married, now the girl called off the wedding."

In a subsequent Twitter post, Minaj displayed a degree of tweeter's remorse (or possibly sarcasm - it's hard to tell).

"OMFG. My cousin who has #TheFriend just texted me telling me to call him," she told her followers.

"If he saw this on the news it's all your fault!

"It was supposed to be a secret.

"If either of them ask, u ain't heard it from me. Okay?"



HEALTH & BEAUTY

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