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### Today's issue of PD

*Pharmacy Daily* today features three pages of news, plus a full page from **Flordis Prospan**.

### eNRMC rollout

**THE** Federal Dept of Health will implement a transitional Electronic National Residential Medication Charts (eNRMC) arrangement from tomorrow, in order to allow Residential Aged Care Services (RACs) to begin adopting and benefiting from eNRMC products.

Legislation is being amended to allow the transition, enabling RACs to use eNRMC products which meet the required technical specifications while prescription delivery services and dispensing software vendors continue to develop their products.

Information packs have been developed for pharmacists, prescribers, software vendors and RACs to give an overview of what is required to participate under the transitional arrangement - for full details see [health.gov.au](http://health.gov.au).

## Naloxone program will save lives: PSA

**THE** national expansion of the free Take Home Naloxone (THN) program from 01 Jul (*PD* 27 Jun) is being welcomed by the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA), with National President Fei Sim saying pharmacists will play a key role in ensuring the rollout of the scheme is successful.

Under the national program naloxone will be available across Australia for free and without a prescription, to anyone who may experience, or witness, an opioid overdose or adverse reaction.

The expansion of the scheme into all jurisdictions follows a trial of the scheme in NSW, Western Australia and South Australia.

"Naloxone saves lives," Sim said.

"During the pilot three lives were saved each day, but with wider access we expect to see an even greater impact.

"As our most accessible healthcare professionals, community pharmacists will play a critical role in ensuring that every Australian can access this life-saving medicine," she said.

"One dose of naloxone previously cost around \$40, but from 01 Jul anyone can walk into their local pharmacy and receive two free



doses of naloxone, as well as expert advice from pharmacists about how to administer it," Sim added, noting that the trial had shown that the harm caused by excessive opioid use could be reduced by making medicines such as naloxone more accessible and removing cost barriers.

"Anyone taking opioids for pain management, or caring for someone who does, should collect naloxone from their local pharmacist. We can also provide advice about identifying an opioid overdose," the PSA chief said.

"Over recent years we have seen more cases of illicit party drugs being spiked with acetyl-fentanyl which can cause opioid overdoses even in small amounts.

"We are urging young people who

use recreational drugs like cocaine to visit their local pharmacy and carry naloxone on a night out.

"Your pharmacist is there to provide judgement-free, expert advice, on when and how to use this life-saving drug.

"It could save your life, or the life of a friend."

Fees for supplying naloxone range from \$40 to \$50 depending on the product supplied.

**CLICK HERE** for more details.

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### Pharmacy awards

**AMCAL** has been named as the "Best Rated Pharmacy Brand" in the 2021/22 Finder Retail Awards, having been recommended by 94% of about 8,000 Aussies surveyed under the awards program.

Other finalists in the pharmacy category included Priceline as well as Chemist Warehouse, which took out the award for Best Rated Makeup Retailer.



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## Accuretic update

**NEW** Zealand's Pharmac medicines agency has advised health professionals that supply of Pfizer's Accuretic (quinapril with hydrochlorothiazide) will be disrupted due to the detection of nitrosamine contamination.

The issue means almost 36,000 New Zealanders taking the blood pressure medicine will need to change treatments, with Pharmac spokesperson Lisa Williams confirming voluntary recalls are also happening in other countries including Australia, Europe, Canada and the USA.

Pharmac has been working with Pfizer over recent months to secure an alternative product but "because it's a global issue no alternative brand is available in sufficient volumes for New Zealand and that can be verified as being free from contamination".

## PBS Safety Net payment change

**SERVICES** Australia is changing PBS Safety Net payment statements, which have now been updated for all processed claims.

Effective from Jul 2022 pharmacies will receive two separate statements in relation to claims - a Reconciliation Statement and a Recipient Created Tax Invoice and Payment Advice.

The statements will be accessible via the Health Professional Online Services (HPOS) Mail Centre, which is accessible via the Provider Digital Access (PRODA) system.

Pharmacies can register for a PRODA account by **CLICKING HERE**, which will also allow them to order PBS Safety Net stationery via HPOS.

Those without an HPOS account will receive payment statements by mail.

## NSW free flu jabs extended

**NSW** Health Minister Brad Hazzard this morning announced that the state's free influenza vaccination program would be extended until 17 Jul, amid concerns that vaccination rates are still not where they should be.

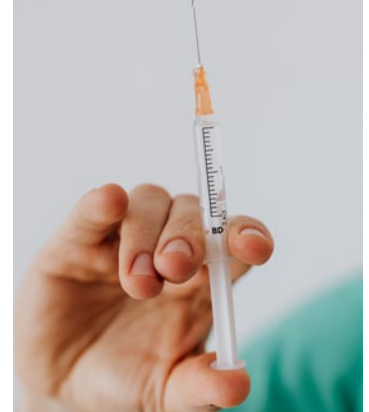
Hazzard cited the latest data showing just 25% of children aged under five had been immunised, while the figures are even lower for those aged five to 15.

"It's really worrying that just over 18% of children and teenagers have had a flu jab," Hazzard said.

"These numbers are particularly concerning given in the last month, four times as many kids have been admitted to Sydney's two children's hospitals with flu than with COVID."

The uptake in adults is equally worrying, with less than 40% of 50 to 65 year olds having had a flu jab, and just 64% of those over 65.

There is particularly low uptake in Sydney's west and south-west, as well as in parts of far Northern NSW and the state's Central West.



NSW Chief Health Officer Dr Kerry Chant AO said more than 1,000 people had presented to emergency departments with flu-like illness in the last week, with almost 165 so unwell they were admitted.

"Please take advantage of the offer of the free vaccination to protect yourself against the flu this winter...there is plenty of supply and appointments available at GPs and pharmacies," Chant said.

## FOR ADULTS 60 YEARS AND OVER, SEVERAL INFLUENZA VACCINE OPTIONS ARE AVAILABLE

Your state health department can provide you with up-to-date information on any cost reimbursement that may be available.

**It's important to discuss influenza protection and vaccine options with your older patients.**



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## Dispensary Corner

**TIRED** doctors tend to prescribe less painkillers, according to a fascinating new study published in *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the USA*.

The authors cited a phenomenon of "depleted empathy reserves," after comparing the prescribing behaviour of medicos on long night shifts with those who had more sociable work schedules.

The study included an empathy assessment of 67 hospital resident doctors - 31 at the beginning of a morning shift, and 36 at the end of working for more than 24 hours, with those at the end of a night shift rating patients' pain as significantly less intense than those who had just started work for the day.

The less empathetic doctors were less likely to prescribe analgesics under various clinical scenarios presented.

The study also looked at thousands of hospital emergency department discharge records, and found that the likelihood of painkillers being prescribed on discharge was up to 30% lower during night shifts than during the day - regardless of reported pain levels and patient complaints.

The "night shift" effect was only seen for analgesic scripts but not for prescriptions relating to other conditions, with the authors saying "this also supports the argument that the effect is driven by changes in empathy, rather than by general fatigue or laziness during the night" - see the study [HERE](#).

## Ding takes TWC gong



**SARAH** Ding from TerryWhite Chemmart (TWC) Coffs Harbour was last night crowned as the pharmacy banner group's 2022 Pharmacist of the Year.

The award was announced during the gala dinner wrapping up the TWC MasterClass training event on the Gold Coast (*PD* yesterday), with organisers saying it had been "our most challenging year in which to judge this award" due to a hotly contested field of finalists from right across the TWC network.

"Sarah has long advocated for the health and care of her community in Coffs harbour, and over the past two years amidst the pandemic has created exceptional health services that provide real outcomes," the judges said.

Ding's initiatives have included a dedicated service and community support group for patients living with chronic pain, as well as being the driving force behind a collaborative palliative care program for the Coffs region, working with doctors, nurses and other community organisations to ensure patients and their carers

feel supported and understand the services available to them.

Ding said "winning this award means so much to me, but it's about more than me - it is about every pharmacist and team member who has survived and managed to thrive over these past two incredibly challenging years".

She's **pictured** second from right with TWC Chief Pharmacist Brendon Hart, TWC co-founder Rhonda White and TWC Executive General Manager Nick Munroe.

## Vax views force registration loss

**THE** Pharmacy Board of Australia has published a new case study relating to its actions over allegations that a pharmacist posted anti-vaccination views on Facebook.

The pharmacist in question held non-practising registration and had a proprietary interest in several pharmacies.

The Board initially proposed conditions for the pharmacist to undertake a program of education and prepare a reflective practice report in relation to the Code of Conduct, Social Media Guide and COVID-19 vaccination position statement.

However the pharmacist declined the proposal and refused to comply, at which point the Board immediately suspended their non-practising registration.

The pharmacist let their registration lapse and confirmed their intention to retire and sell their interests in all pharmacy businesses previously held - see the full case at [pharmacyboard.gov.au](http://pharmacyboard.gov.au).

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\*Reference: 1. Lang C, et al., *Planta Med* 2015;81:968-974. Supported by Engelhard Arzneimittel GmbH & Co. KG.