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## Health Act amendment

A **SPOKESPERSON** for the Pharmacy Guild of Australia said that for "some time there had been a small number of unapproved pharmacy owners who had been working around the law regarding the supply of pharmaceutical benefits, despite steps taken by the Government to control this.

"The Government has now made legislative changes to prohibit an approved pharmacist from being involved in the supply of PBS medicines at premises which are not approved, and to prevent any form of remote dispensing or a depot-style arrangement with a non-approved pharmacy," the spokesperson said.

"These arrangements have been operational for some time but the legislative changes provide the Government with the capacity to better manage any non-compliance."

Today, Federal Health Minister Mark Butler announced that changes have been made to the conditions of approved pharmacists effective 01 Jun (**PD** breaking news).

The *National Health Act 1953* provides payments to pharmacists for the supply of PBS medicines

made at or from premises for which a pharmacist is approved.

"All approved pharmacists are subject to conditions which are required to be adhered to when supplying PBS medicines.

"The amendment seeks to assist approved pharmacists in understanding their requirements when supplying pharmaceutical benefits," Butler said.

The changes as the Guild mentioned before, now prohibit an approved pharmacist from being involved in the supply of PBS medicines, at premises which are not approved, and to prevent any form of remote dispensing or a depot-style arrangement with a non-approved pharmacy, confirmed the Health Minister.

The new Determination on the National Health Legislation Amendment (Conditions of Approval for Approved Pharmacists) Instrument 2023 is available [HERE](#).

### Today's issue of PD

*Pharmacy Daily* today features four pages of news, plus a full page from **TerryWhite Chemmart**.

### Covid job saves

**IN AUSTRALIAN** adults aged 65 years and older, recent COVID-19 vaccination - which is a booster dose received in the last three months - has reduced the risk of death from SARS-CoV-2 infection by as much as 93%, compared to those who were unvaccinated, a new national study of 3.8 million adults has shown.

To learn more about this study [CLICK HERE](#).

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## JV for Vitura and Releaf

**VITURA** Health has established an unincorporated joint venture (JV) with Australian-based Releaf Group which is expected to increase the volume of medicinal cannabis products prescribed and distributed through the CanView platform, the number of patients and prescribers registered, and using the platform's functionality.

Under the terms of the JV agreement, Vitura will provide Releaf, including its franchisees, a Releaf-branded version of Vitura's CanView platform for exclusive use by Releaf's prescribing doctors, dispensaries and patients.

The CanView platform may benefit Releaf by increasing workflow efficiencies, better compliance reporting, and be a turnkey operating solution for new franchisees.

In turn the JV provides Vitura with exposure to Releaf's physical location business model in high foot traffic locations.

Vitura CEO, Rodney Cocks, shared that he is excited to see

"the CanView platform being favoured as the complete end-to-end technology solution, and working closely with Releaf to build on their leading position in the physical location clinical space providing better service through the CanView platform."

Gary Mackenzie, CEO of Releaf, said he is pleased to partner with Vitura and integrate its CanView platform into Releaf clinical services and dispensaries.

"This JV will enhance our workflow efficiencies, compliance reporting and provide a turnkey solution for new franchisees.

"We are excited to offer our patients a seamless experience with the Releaf-branded CanView platform and access to a wider range of medical cannabis products, including the iconic North American brand Cookies."

This is the first deployment of the CanView platform with the backing of two distribution centres in Melbourne and on the Gold Coast.

## PSA's Angley to head up SA/NT branch

**PHARMACIST** and disability advocate Dr Manya Angley FPS (pictured), has been elected to lead the Pharmaceutical Society's South Australia and Northern Territory branch.

Dr Angley is an accredited pharmacist with more than 30 years of experience in pharmacy.

Dr Angley is particularly well-known for her advocacy in the disability sector and has a particular interest in the quality use of psychotropic medicines.

The SA/NT Branch Committee has also elected Adam Forrest MPS and Colleen Niland MPS as Vice-Presidents, and Dr Natalie Soulsby FPS as the National Board Director.

"I am humbled and proud to take on this important role and will endeavour to work collaboratively with Vice-Presidents Colleen and Adam, Nat as Board Director, and all other committee members," Angley shared.



"Our committee has diverse strengths which means we are well positioned to deal with any challenge we are presented with."

Dr Angley also thanked outgoing committee members for their service to the profession.

"I wish to thank Veronika Seda for her service to our profession as President, particularly for her work on improving vaccine access for South Australians."

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

\*Chesty Cough W/E 2022-12-31





## Floor price works

**NEW** research published today sheds light on the effects of minimum alcohol pricing, debunking the argument that it penalises all drinkers.

The Public Health Association of Australia says the analysis published in the *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health* demonstrates why the measure currently in place in the Northern Territory is fair and should be adopted in other jurisdictions.

Dr Nic Taylor, lead author at National Drug Research Institute at Curtin University, says that the results show there is minimal cost impact on moderate drinkers.

"We found that the average alcohol expenditure for moderate drinkers only went up by a very modest \$3.07 per year, a less than 1% increase or less than six cents more on alcohol a week," Taylor said.

Learn more [HERE](#).

## College on triptan usage

**JUST** over 20% of Australians or 4.9 million people suffer from migraines, with 71% of those migraine sufferers being women and 86% being of working age, according to the Australasian College of Pharmacy.

While a migraine is not life-threatening, it is associated with significant impact on quality of life.

Attacks often disrupt normal life, and impact the ability to work, study and maintain healthy relationships.

The College stated that triptans are a class of medications that have transformed the management of migraines.

From 01 Feb 2021, eletriptan, rizatriptan, sumatriptan and zolmitriptan can be supplied to patients as a Schedule 3 medicine for the acute relief of migraine.

However, triptans are not appropriate for all people living with migraines, and the choice to use them should consider patient and symptom factors, the



College stressed, adding that it has launched a module to provide an update on the complexities of migraine management.

The module also provides pharmacists with useful information to confidently manage a Schedule 3 request for these medications.

The Australasian College of Pharmacy and their partner GuildEd would like to acknowledge Viatrix's financial support and subject matter expertise in developing this module.

To enrol in this migraine-medication course, [CLICK HERE](#).

## Low Vision Paks

**WEBSTERCARE** has developed Webster-pak Low Vision, a dose administration aid designed for those with low vision to effectively manage their medications.

The Webster-pak Low Vision features Low Vision Folder labels with white text on a black label to ensure that medication information can be easily read and understood.

Additionally, the use of braille allows individuals to navigate and identify their medications according to the prescribed schedule, promoting independence and accuracy in medication administration.

Consolidating multiple medications into a single pack eliminates the need for multiple pill bottles, streamlining med routines.

The organised compartments of the Webster-pak Low Vision also reduce the likelihood of medication errors.

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## Dispensary Corner

**MIDWIVES** can suffer hearing damage from the screams of women giving birth, according to research reported in *Fagbladet*.

It started with occupational hygienist Lars A. Saele being called to measure the noise level in the delivery ward at Ullevål Hospital in Oslo, Norway.

The measurements showed that screams from women giving birth exceeded 130 decibels.

"That is louder than a full-on rock band, and on par with the sound of a siren," Saele said.

On average, midwives and nurses in the delivery ward are exposed to 73 decibels of noise during a shift.

Researcher and acoustician Tron Vedul Tronstad has no doubt that the noise levels measured in the maternity ward at Ullevål Hospital can cause hearing damage.

"Being exposed to an average of 73 decibels throughout the working day is high but should be possible to tolerate if you get rest afterward.

"However, if you are exposed to 120 and 130 decibels, there is an immediate risk of harm," Tronstad said.

"Earplugs will reduce the loudest sounds to a level where the risk of immediate harm is not as high."

Rest can also help because of the total load counts, and sound is less harmful if exposure is divided, explained Tronstad.

The survey was conducted with two midwives and nurses wearing sound monitors on their uniforms for 10 shifts.

## Guild says decisions are not set in stone

**THE** Pharmacy Guild is highlighting that the "backflip" by the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee (PBAC), on restricting the availability of an asthma medication, means the body's decisions are not set in stone.

Welcoming the reversal, National Guild President Trent Twomey said it was a pragmatic and common sense win for patients.

"Quite clearly the original decision to restrict availability of this important medicine was wrong," Twomey said.

"There was no logic to it, and the PBAC has now seen sense.

"This whole issue highlights that PBAC decisions can be reviewed and reversed when there is clear and demonstrable evidence that they are wrong.

"The PBAC decisions are not



sacrosanct, and they are - as they should be - open to robust and evidence-based examination."

The PBAC asthma medicine reversal comes just a month after it was announced, without any warning, saw the introduction of limitations which required specialists to prescribe fluticasone propionate 50mcg for children under the age of six (**PD 15 May**).

Under the PBAC decision last

month, the medicines for children aged six years and under had to be initially prescribed by a respiratory specialist, and also only be prescribed with authority approval by Medicare.

In addition, patients over the age of six could no longer access the medicine as a pharmaceutical benefit, forcing them to buy privately, imposing a significant cost burden, the Guild statement concluded.

## PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT

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