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NZ to cease med

DUE to a review by the New Zealand regulatory authority, Medsafe, and on advice from the Medicines Adverse Reactions Committee, meds containing pholcodine will no longer be available in NZ pharmacies from 12 Jan 24.

Unsustainable healthcare

THE sustainability of the healthcare sector has been called into question by FIP president, Australian Paul Sinclair.

During his presidential address at the opening of FIP's 81st World Congress of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences in Brisbane on 24 Sep, Sinclair declared that, "for far too long, the negative impact of the healthcare sector on our environment has been a marginal topic".

Sinclair's speech focused on sustainability and described how FIP's SustainabilityRx program addresses the linked issues of environmental and planetary health, response to disasters and pandemics, and sustainable services.

Sinclair explained that sustainability requires not only economic viability, environmental protection, and social equity but also basic human needs such as healthcare to be met.

"Health systems must become more efficient as many needs could be met by pharmacists," he added.

He underlined primary healthcare as a cornerstone of sustainable health systems and universal health coverage but also emphasised the importance of workforce, education, technology, research, collaboration and funding.

"Pharmacy itself must be sustainable," he said, expressing concern about pharmacists being pressured to deliver more services without adequate support and of pharmacies reducing their opening hours or even closing completely in some countries.

"This is an enormous blow to



communities, and health and finance ministers alike must recognise pharmacy as integral to a well-functioning health system."

Sinclair urged the pharmacy profession to remain as united against challenges as it had been during the COVID-19 pandemic to help build a more sustainable future for healthcare.

MEANWHILE, the FIP's 2023 Pharmaceutical Education Organisational Award went to Monash University, Australia, for its development of 'MyDispense'.

This is a free online simulation tool that helps provide a safe environment for pharmacy students to hone their dispensing skills.

Pictured: FIP's Paul Sinclair presenting the award to Prof Arthur Christopolous, Dean of the Faculty of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences at Monash University. JG

Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features three pages of news.

Shortage still on

THE shortage of Ozempic (semaglutide) has been extended to 31 Dec.

To help patients continue their treatment without interruption, the TGA recommended it only be used for the registered indications.

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*#1 selling non-prescription menopause relief product in Switzerland. References: 1. Lopatka L et al, Journal of Menopause 2007; 2:16-21. 2. IQVIA, national sales data Switzerland, sell-in (Pharmacy, Drugstore, Self-dispensing Doctors), turnover (ex-factory) in CHF, MAT June 2021.

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The sky is the limit for Life's pharmacists



AS WE celebrated 'pharmacy strengthening health systems' on World Pharmacists Day 2023 yesterday, a pharmacist in regional NSW has taken to the skies to deliver COVID-19 vaccinations to hundreds of aged care residents in the state's rural and remote areas.

Jack Buckley, pharmacist and co-owner of Life Pharmacy Forbes, Flannery's Pharmacy

Forbes and Life Pharmacy Orange, has been a pilot for 15 years and chartered his own aircraft to help vaccinate aged care residents across NSW.

Life Pharmacy's pharmacists from Dubbo, Parkes and Bathurst have travelled over 3,700km in 145 hours to Gilgandra, Wellington, Narromine, Yeoval, Bathurst, & Gulgong to deliver 603 vaccines, and will continue to do so.

Qld scope pilot expands

THE Queensland Health Minister Shannon Fentiman has announced that the North Queensland Pharmacy Scope of Practice Pilot will be expanded statewide, allowing pharmacists to administer a wider range of vaccines and prescribe medicines for common health conditions.

Speaking at the FIP World Congress in Brisbane yesterday, Minister Fentiman confirmed that participating pharmacists will be able to administer more types of vaccines and prescribe treatments such as the oral contraceptive pill, asthma medication, nausea and vomiting medication.

Further, pharmacists will be able to prescribe treatments for nasal congestion, runny noses, mild skin conditions, some heart disease issues, and smoking cessation.

The Pharmaceutical Society of Australia's Qld President Shane MacDonald welcomed the govt's announcement.

"Qld has often led the nation on

pharmacist scope of practice, and other jurisdictions are watching the results of trials and following suit."

The Pharmacy Guild of Australia, Qld branch Acting President Rick Xynias added, "today's announcement demonstrates that Qld is leading the way for community pharmacists to practice to their full scope, which demonstrates the latent potential of community pharmacists playing a larger role within the state's primary healthcare network.

While the National President of the Pharmacy Guild of Australia, Trent Twomey commented the pilot will take pressure off over-stretched Emergency Departments, which means better health outcomes across the healthcare system.

"We are completing tertiary-level education and practical training to provide patients with access to safe healthcare treatment and services.

"This announcement also brings us in line with Canada, Wales, England and New Zealand." JG



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Dispensary Corner

E-COMMERCE giant Amazon's foray into online pharmacy in North America has not come without its hiccups - like the recent case of a Canadian couple who received an unexpected shipment of more than 1,000 condoms.

No, they weren't planning an exceptionally romantic weekend, with Joelle Angleheart from Chappleau in northern Ontario telling local media that they had actually disregarded an Amazon notification about the upcoming delivery.

"We automatically assumed the email was a scam because it was not something we would purchase," she said, with her husband having been in hospital recovering from illness at the time of the error.

The bumper delivery of Trojan Ultra Thins came along with a most unwelcome CAD\$670 credit card charge, with Amazon initially refusing to provide a refund on the package because it was a "personal item".

After four months of trying to get her money back, Angleheart raised the matter with her local TV station CTV News, and then Amazon Canada became somewhat more helpful.

The company eventually confirmed it had secured her account and returned the money, with Amazon saying it suspected the customer had been hacked.

As an extra bonus, she was told she could keep the condoms, which **PD** thinks may give her husband something to look forward to when he gets better.

Practice diversity to grow

ADVANCED practice pharmacist Debbie Rigby (pictured), has lauded the diversity of career choices in the pharmaceutical industry.

Crediting International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) as the owner and promoter of World Pharmacists Day, Rigby said "it is an ideal time to celebrate the everyday contributions of pharmacists, for the quality use of medicines in the management of asthma and associated allergies".

She acknowledged the importance of the varied career pathways available to pharmacists, beyond the traditional roles available in community and hospital pharmacy.

"Pharmacists should be wherever medicines are - in the home, in aged care disability services, in Aboriginal Medical Services, as well as in academia, education and across industry.

"This diversity of practice will only continue to grow as we face an ageing population and a growing number of complex medicines," Rigby said.

As the National Asthma Council Clinical Executive Lead, Rigby also reminded the industry all that most adults and adolescents with asthma should be taking a preventer every day to avoid asthma flare-ups.

"Pharmacists credentialed to conduct Home Medicines Reviews



have an ideal opportunity to do a comprehensive patient assessment.

"Using validated tools to assess asthma control, you can provide patient education after discussing the patient's beliefs, preferences and attitudes," Rigby explained.

"Pharmacists have an important role to play in checking asthma inhaler device technique, assessing adherence to therapy, and providing recommendations to prescribers on guideline-based treatment," Rigby commented.

Community pharmacists play an important role in ensuring optimal treatment for patients with concomitant asthma and allergic rhinitis, Rigby added.

"Identify those patients who may ask for pharmacy-only medicines for their hayfever, and then recommend appropriate treatment," said Rigby, who has worked for over 40 years across clinical pharmacy practice, interdisciplinary care, policy and advocacy, clinical governance, guidelines development and education in Australia. *JG*

College's new oral contraception course

TO CELEBRATE World Pharmacists' Day, the Australasian College of Pharmacy has launched a new course, *Oral Contraceptives: a comprehensive course for pharmacists*.

The free course is CPD-accredited, backed by an experienced education provider,

and while required for those participating in the NSW Pharmacy Trial, is open to all pharmacists in Australia.

Further, non-members can save as much as 60% off fees for a membership to the College, which for a limited time costs only \$150.

To learn more **CLICK HERE**.

Pharmacy Guild Update

Pharmacy Profile available for members

THE Pharmacy Guild has just launched the 'Pharmacy Profile' as part of its Workforce Capability Project.

The Pharmacy Profile is available for members to view on the website and is an overview of the pharmacy industry, providing insights into the various parts of the sector.

This includes:

- Locations of community pharmacy;
- Roles within pharmacy;
- Workforce structure;
- Training and qualifications; and
- Employment conditions.

It also includes a handy graph illustrating the breakdown of the workforce by percentage.

For example, did you know that Pharmacy Assistants make up 50% of the pharmacy workforce, while Community Pharmacists represent 31% of the workforce?

There's also a flow chart showing the pathway in training and qualifications.

Members can find out more about the profile by clicking here and going to 'Latest Reports'.

The Workforce Capability Project is an initiative to understand factors contributing to workforce shortages and what improvements are needed to ensure pharmacy can attract the right people with the right skills.

The project also includes the 2023 Workforce Survey which is now open to pharmacists and their staff to participate.