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## Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today has three pages of pharmacy news, plus a full page from Willach.

## CEO sleepout

**GUARDIAN** Pharmacy Head, Kurt O'Brien, joined thousands of business leaders across the country in taking part in the Vinnies CEO Sleepout last week, to raise funds and awareness for homeless people across the country.

O'Brien has raised more than \$4,100 for the cause to date, having spent a night in his car, to experience what is a nightly reality of many Australians.

"Homelessness doesn't discriminate, and whether it's in their car, on the streets, or just finding a place to rest your head is sometimes the challenging reality that many face," he said.

"We [Guardian] have a longstanding partnership with Vinnies, and we have been working together to support those most at risk within our community."

# Cyber attack warning a wake-up call

**CYBER** attacks launched by a sophisticated foreign "state-based" hacker are a wake-up call for the pharmacy sector, experts believe.

While Prime Minister, Scott Morrison, said the attacks were focused on Government and corporate organisations, Fred IT Group General Manager Managed Services, Andrew McManus, stressed the risk of being targeted by hackers was "real" for small businesses, including pharmacies.

"What we're seeing is that small businesses are increasingly being attacked," he said.

"The reality is that small businesses are more vulnerable than some of those [Governmental agencies and corporations], because they haven't previously invested in cyber security, and if they have it's been very basic."

McManus urged pharmacy owners to take steps to ensure their computers are fit for purpose and using up-to-date software.

"We're aware that a number of pharmacies are running old computers [and] old operating systems [like] Windows 7," he said.

"If they're still running Windows 7 they might as well be leaving their front-door open to be brutally

honest.

"They need to get off Windows 7, they need to get onto Windows 10 and keep that up-to-date and patched."

He added that while anti-virus software is an important tool, "it's no longer enough", recommending pharmacy owners consider using a 24/7 security operating centre to provide round the clock cyber surveillance, to protect data.

"We liken it to a lock on a door," he said.

"Everyone had locks on doors 30, 40 years ago, but we now have monitored alarm systems, we have security cameras and they act as additional deterrents to criminals.

"These sorts of systems are available to pharmacies [for cyber security protection]."

Australian Digital Health Agency (ADHA) interim CEO, Bettina McMahon, echoed the call for pharmacies to ensure they are using the latest versions of software to "address known security vulnerabilities", and advised owners to provide security awareness training to improve their knowledge of cyber risks.

With health data one of the areas reportedly targeted during



the recent attacks, McMahon reminded pharmacy owners that organisations, including pharmacies, that use the My Health Record (MHR) system are required to have MHR security and access policies in place to protect data.

She added that the ADHA has a cyber security team working round the clock to monitor and respond to potential threats.

"The system is built and tested to Australian Government standards to protect the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of the health records," she said

"Healthcare providers – including community pharmacy – take patient confidentiality very seriously. We continue to work with them to improve their resilience against cyber threats."

## Australia Day to get COVID-19 rebrand

**AUSTRALIA'S** essential workers, including pharmacists, will be celebrated for their heroic efforts in supporting the community through the COVID-19 crisis on Australia Day 2021.

Prime Minister, Scott Morrison, announced plans to honour those who worked through the pandemic to ensure the continuity of key services

throughout the pandemic, with a once-off National Day of Thanks.

The Prime Minister acknowledged the efforts of health workers, hosting a morning tea last week, with Capital Chemist Chisholm proprietor and Pharmacy of the Year 2020 winner, Rebecca Young, representing the profession.

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## Pharmacist Rx takes step forward

**MEASURES** to enable pharmacist prescribing are moving forward with the Queensland State Government releasing the protocols for the Urinary Tract Infection Pharmacy Pilot - Queensland (UTIPP-Q) trial.

The move will enable community pharmacists who have enrolled in the program to provide empirical treatment to non-pregnant women with acute uncomplicated cystitis, using antibiotics.

Pilot lead, Professor Lisa Nissen, who previously led the Queensland vaccination trial, welcomed the publication of the Drug Therapy Protocol - Pharmacist UTI Trial.

"This is another fantastic opportunity for pharmacists to increase their contribution to patient care in the community," she said.

"We are looking forward to evaluating the outcomes."

Pharmacy Guild of Australia Queensland Branch President, Trent Twomey, said the decision

to empower pharmacists to treat UTIs under the pilot reflected the growing recognition of the profession's ability to deliver primary care services.

"Community pharmacists stand prepared and waiting to increase their scope of practice and deliver more health services to Queenslanders," he said.

"We have seen first-hand the importance of community pharmacy this year with consumers relying heavily on their trusted community pharmacy for healthcare advice and flu immunisation throughout the pandemic."

Twomey added the trial would allow women seeking treatment for a UTI to visit their local pharmacy and be seen immediately, "to avoid further complications that could result in hospitalisations".

Pharmaceutical Society of Australia Queensland Branch Manager, Chris Campbell, said the green light being given for the pilot



reflected the state's Department of Health's support for the pharmacy profession.

"This brings access to Queensland women a service already successful in other countries and is welcomed with the back drop of COVID-19, a time when pharmacists have kept the doors open to provide quality primary healthcare to Queenslanders," he said.

## PSA Qld election

**EARLY** Career Pharmacist, Shane McDonald, has been named as the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) Queensland Branch's new President.

McDonald was elected by the Branch Committee last week, and replaces former President, Chris Campbell, who has stepped down from the Committee to take on the position as Branch Manager.

Brisbane-based Metro North Hospital and Health Service Clinical Pharmacist and interim Acting President, Sue Carson, and Queensland University of Technology's Pharmacy course co-ordinator, Dr Esther Lau, have been appointed as Branch Vice Presidents.

The appointments follow the PSA's decision to postpone full Branch Committee elections until 2021, as a result of the ongoing COVID-19 crisis.

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## Dispensary Corner

**ACYCLOVIR** just isn't enough for a British personal trainer, who is suing a woman he kissed on a date because he ended up with a cold sore.

45-year-old Martin Conway is claiming £136,328 (about A\$250,000) from a woman he knew as Jovanna Lovelace because she failed to inform him she had the herpes simplex virus before they locked lips.

Conway told the UK *Sun* tabloid the pair met on a dating website, adding he was "left traumatised" by the cold sore, with his life allegedly turned upside down by the ordeal.

He claims the infection has led to panic attacks and stopped him pursuing his "dream career" as a lawyer.

Conway said he's unable to go cycling because he's worried getting too hot may cause a flare-up, and has been left at a higher risk of catching a case of the "rare but devastating" sporadic encephalitis.

"I was kissed before I was informed of any cold sore," he told the newspaper, insisting the woman had a "moral and ethical duty to warn me of the risks that I would be exposed to".

A formal compensation claim has been lodged in the Central London County Court, with the amount sought including income protection insurance and more than £100,000 to cover fortnightly therapy sessions until he turns 79.

In her defence Lovelace has denied any liability, describing the action as "frivolous and vexatious".

## Guild rejects AIR claims

**PHARMACISTS** are not "dragging the chain" when it comes to reporting vaccinations they have provided to the Australian Immunisations Register (AIR), Pharmacy Guild of Australia Tasmanian Branch Director, Monique MacKrell, says.

Responding to the National Centre for Immunisation Research and Surveillance's *Review of pharmacist vaccination reporting to AIR*, which reported there was significant under-reporting to the register (*PD* 16 Jun), MacKrell told *Pharmacy Daily* that pharmacies were complying with State and Territory requirements.

"We reject any suggestion that pharmacists are dragging the chain on reporting vaccinations to the AIR," she said.

"In most states and territories, it is compulsory for pharmacies to record immunisations to AIR.

"The problem has been at the receiving end – the AIR failing to register submitted data from pharmacy software.

"The AIR has confirmed there is a



backlog of pharmacy data that has been appropriately submitted but which they have been unable to load onto the register."

A number of pharmacists have voiced concerns that the report was editorialised, on social media, with Pharmaceutical Society of Australia South Australia and Northern Territory Branch Vice President, Samuel Keitannpaa, noting on Twitter that there was "no mention if any discrepancy in AIR is from pharmacy or not".

## Weekly Comment

Welcome to Pharmacy Daily's weekly comment feature. This week's contributor is **Rachelle Frain, General Manager, myPak Solutions.**



### When and how to move to automation?

**AUTOMATION** for Dose Administration Aid (DAA) packing has become more established over the past few years in Australia. With the increased focus and support for DAA's, and the extension of the Instant Asset Write Off (IAWO) until Dec 2020, now is the ideal time to consider investing in automation.

There are several options available to support your current DAA operations, as well as scaling for growth. Ensuring an appropriate return on your investment, whilst benefiting from a reduction on time and resource demands, are all critical in evaluating options.

The right DAA packing solution will ensure you significantly improve current DAA output, scale seamlessly for growth, ensure accuracy on medication packs, and utilise skilled staff to maintain focus on patients and patient care.

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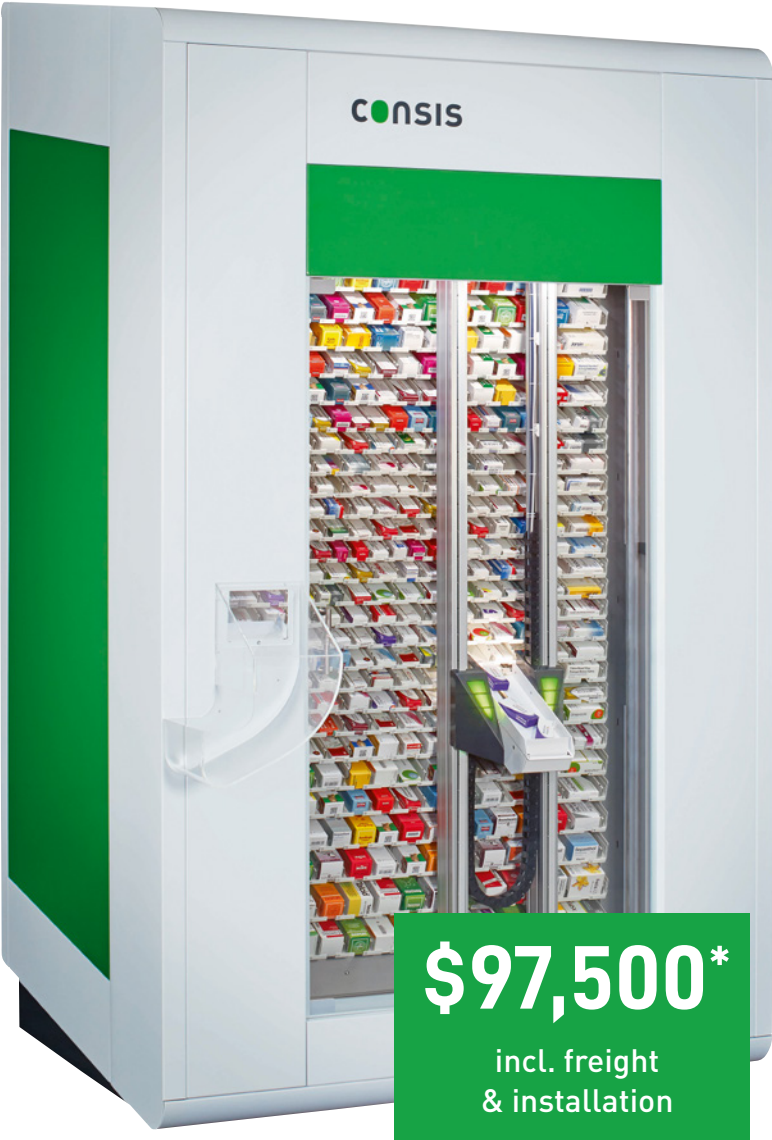
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