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## Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features three pages of news, plus a full page from API.

## Guild backs pandemic pay

NEWS that Victorian workers who have exhausted sick leave entitlements will be eligible to access a \$1,500 Federal Government payment, is being welcomed by the Pharmacy Guild of Australia.

With the COVID-19 crisis worsening in the State, Guild Victorian Branch President, Anthony Tassone, said "the question of support across the community for all workers affected by COVID outbreaks is now an appropriate focus of Federal and State Governments".

"As a matter of principle we believe the support by Governments is warranted and essential in circumstances where workers and businesses are suffering impacts," he said.

It is currently unclear how the payments will be delivered to workers forced to self-isolate.

# SA fund to secure pharmacy services

SOUTH Australian pharmacies impacted by COVID-19 will be given access to a \$200,000 emergency fund announced by State Health Minister, Stephen Wade this morning.

The fund has been established to ensure critical pharmacy services can be maintained in the event that a store is threatened with closure due to COVID-19.

"Ensuring access to medicines during the COVID-19 pandemic is part of the Marshall Liberal Government's strong plan to protect South Australians from the impacts of the disease by ensuring they are able to access treatment for other health problems," he said.

"While South Australia has performed extremely well so far, we remain at risk, so it is important that we introduce measures now to protect these vital services.

"By ensuring our pharmacies can remain open, we will help to reduce demand and attendance at our public hospitals and emergency departments in the event of a second wave."

SA Health's Chief Pharmacist, Naomi Burgess, said the Continuation of Critical Community



Pharmacy Services Program, was set up after concerns were raised over the ability of single pharmacist stores and rural and remote pharmacies to maintain services in the event of an outbreak amongst their staff.

"Pharmacies impacted by COVID-19 will be able to apply for the program if their workforce cannot be immediately supported by existing options or locum services," she said.

"We urge all pharmacies to establish contingency plans to mitigate the risks of loss of staff or the closure of the pharmacy due to a COVID-19 related event, the fund will only be available to South

Australian pharmacies that have exhausted all other options."

The fund will be overseen by the Pharmacy Regulation Authority SA, and will provide access to qualified pharmacists and pharmacy assistants who have volunteered to undertake such roles, to ensure critical services can be maintained.

SA Health said pharmacies would be able to access the support for a period of up to five days.

Members of the Rural Pharmacy Network Australia Facebook group have welcomed the fund as a "great idea", while the group's administrator suggested that a similar scheme was "needed nationwide".

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## Human error drives data breaches

**HUMAN** error is the top cause of notifiable data breaches for Australian health providers, the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC) reveals.

The latest *OAIC Notifiable Data Breaches Report* covering Jan to Jun 2020, recorded a 16% increase in notifications of the previous corresponding period, with 115 breaches relating to health organisations.

The report, released on Fri 31 Jul, followed warnings by Fred IT Group CEO, Paul Naismith, that pharmacy owners needed to boost cyber security measures ahead of the rollout of electronic prescriptions (*PD 28 Jul*).

“Cyber security has become an important area of compliance for pharmacy,” he said.

“Our industry faces the same responsibilities to notify of data breaches that other businesses face.

“Quality Care 2020 also requires



that pharmacies are taking action in cyber security.”

In total 518 notifications were made to the OAIC in the first six months of 2020, with the health sector accounting for 22% of all breaches.

Across all sectors, malicious or criminal attacks were the main cause of breaches (61%), down 7% from the Jul to Dec 2019 figures.

However, human error accounted for 57% of breaches in the health sector, with notifications of date

being sent to the wrong recipient the most common issue, followed by unauthorised disclosure.

A total of six healthcare-related data breaches related to a “rogue employee” or “insider threat”, while a further seven cases were associated with the theft of paperwork or data storage devices.

The health sector reported four system fault breaches with three cases of “unintended release or publication of data”, and one incidence of unintended access.

## Diacomit listed

**CHIESI** Australia’s Diacomit (stiripentol) has becoming the first new treatment for seizures associated with Dravet syndrome to be listed on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) in more than a decade.

The drug was approved by the Therapeutic Goods Administration last year, and became available through the PBS on 01 Aug.

The listing is also the first for the newly formed Chiesi Australia.

## Pharmacists’ COVID return

**CLOSE** to 2,000 previously registered pharmacists have rejoined the profession to support Australia’s COVID response.

Since the introduction of the pandemic sub-register 1,952 pharmacists have been added to the list of those eligible to participate in the pharmacy workforce, the Pharmacy Board of Australia revealed in its latest update.

The short-term sub-register was launched on 06 Apr and operates on an opt-out basis, with eligible practitioners added automatically.

Pharmacists who choose to stay on the sub-register must comply with the Board’s Code of Conduct and meet professional indemnity insurance requirements.

Those enrolled on the sub-register will be removed after 12 months.

## Brace for further COVID challenges

**PHARMACISTS** are being warned to expect challenging times ahead.

In the Pharmacy Board of Australia’s latest newsletter, Chair, Brett Simmonds, praised the professionalism of pharmacists in recent months, but said it was unlikely that the public health crisis will abate any time soon.

“There will possibly be more

challenges ahead of us in the weeks to come and I am sure that dedicated pharmacists across Australia and their support staff will prepare to meet those challenges head-on,” he said.

“On behalf of the Board, I offer a heartfelt thank you to the pharmacists who continue to demonstrate extraordinary leadership during this unprecedented time.”

## Guild Update

### Go Local First

**THE** Pharmacy Guild, as a partner of the Council of Small Business Organisations of Australia, is supporting the council’s call for small businesses, including community pharmacies across Australia, to support the ‘Go Local First’ campaign.

The campaign is designed to remind people of the importance of the thousands of small businesses across Australia.

Australian consumers are being urged to do their bit to help the economic recovery by buying locally from small businesses in their communities in a nationwide campaign being delivered by the COSBOA.

**GO LOCAL FIRST** encourages Australians to choose local small businesses when they are purchasing products and services to help get the sector back on its feet, keep Australians in jobs, and money in local communities.

Australia’s 3.5 million small businesses have been severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

For more details click [here](#).

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## Dispensary Corner

**AUSTRALIA'S** internet capacity is being stretched during the ongoing COVID-19 crisis, and it could face further pressure if the nation follows advice coming from Ireland.

With rising numbers of positive cases being identified in the 25-44 age group on the Emerald Isle, the Irish Pharmacy Union (IPU) has recommended that non-cohabiting couples should take their romance online, with a new 'Play it Safe' campaign.

Working in conjunction with local health authorities pharmacists have been asked to encourage younger people to limited themselves "to as few partners as possible, preferably one regular partner".

For those unable to find that special one, or just the wildly passionate, the advice coming from the IPU is that they should "consider... remote sexual activity (e.g. online) as [an] alternative to physical sexual activity with others".

In line with many other health messages that have been issued in recent months, pharmacies will be providing a free promotional condom as part of the campaign.



## Pharmacy expands at James Cook

**JAMES** Cook University is expanding its pharmacy program to offer students the opportunity to base themselves in Cairns and Mackay as well as on the Townsville campus.

The university's Head of Pharmacy, Associate Professor John Smithson, told the *Cairns Post* that the program would give students a greater choice when it comes to their location.

"Where previously students had to relocate to Townsville to study the Bachelor of Pharmacy on campus, from next year they will be able to choose from three locations," he said.

"The course will be taught through a mix of online and on-campus sessions.

"Flexible delivery means everyone, from school leavers to those planning a career change while balancing work and family, will be able to complete this degree in Cairns [or Mackay].

"This is a big step forward for the profession, making it possible to



train pharmacists in the regions that need them."

Cairns-based pharmacy owner, and James Cook University's Pharmacy Advisory Committee Chair, Nick Loukas, said the decision to expand the course into the university's Cairns and Mackay campuses was a significant boost for the North Queensland university.

"This new offering means we can grow our own pharmacy professionals," he said.

"There are many opportunities for graduate pharmacists in our

region and with the extended scope of practice now available, it's a rewarding career."

The decision to take the university's pharmacy program to multiple campuses was announced as the Queensland Government prepares a \$150 million rescue package to assist the state's universities cope with the impact of COVID-19.

Premier, Annastacia Palaszczuk, said the funding would help keep universities open in the state and safeguard jobs.

### Vampire Cup

**THE** National Australia Pharmacy Student's Association (NAPSA) annual Vampire Cup blood donation drive got underway yesterday.

The challenge runs until 11 Oct, with the various branches from BAPS to WAPSA competing for the coveted title.

Pharmacy graduates can lend a vein by getting in touch with their local NAPSA branch and joining their Lifeblood Team to add their donations to the team's tally.

## Win with John Plunkett's

Everyday this week Pharmacy Daily and John Plunkett's are giving away a SuperLift Collagen Eye Lift worth RRP\$39.95

John Plunkett's SuperLift Collagen Eye Lift is a day and night eye cream packed with peptides including Matrixyl 3000 and Eyeseryl to boost collagen by 100%, and Hyaluronic Acid to provide cushioning hydration, while Rosehip Oil softens and smoothes delicate skin around the eyes. Effectively targets three causes of ageing – fine line and wrinkles, eyebags and puffiness and dark circles. For more info, click here.

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