

MEDIA RELEASE

## **Medication management critical to improving Parkinson's therapy**

*World Parkinson's Day, April 11*

For people living with Parkinson's, taking medications *on time, every time is critical*.

Parkinson's disease is the second most common neurodegenerative disorder, after Alzheimer's disease. It is a progressive, chronic condition that affects a person's control of their body movements.

In Australia, there are approximately 80,000 people living with Parkinson's disease, with one in five being diagnosed before the age of 50.

Almost 14,000 Australians are diagnosed with the disease every year. Without a medical breakthrough, this number is expected to double in 15 years.

While the disease cannot be cured its symptoms can be managed with a combination of medication and multidisciplinary support, enabling people with Parkinson's to live independent and productive lives.

However, once medication is prescribed, it is lifelong and requires taking medications *on time, every time*. Current treatment largely relies on prescription drugs administered in tablet or capsule form and can involve multiple daily doses and complex dosing regimens. This complexity plays a part in poor compliance among patients. Some studies suggest non-compliance is as high as 67 percent.

"Taking medications late, even a minor change in timing, can have major negative impact and severely hamper the movements of a person living with Parkinson's. The uneven release of dopamine can result in a person suddenly not being able to move, get out of bed, walk down a corridor, or more serious complications," says Julie Austin Parkinson's NSW Specialist Nurse

Educating patients and their carers is one method of improving patient adherence to therapy. Simplifying drug regimens can also help.

Ensuring Parkinson's disease patients receive their medications on time, every time prompted Webstercare - the industry leader in medication management - to trial a special medications folder specifically for Parkinson's drugs, which is now available nationally.

Developed in partnership with Parkinson NSW, the distinctive fuchsia Webster-pak<sup>®</sup> folder sets out medication in a useful blister pack that arranges the medications and the specific times they need to be taken throughout the day. The Parkinson's Webster-pak is specifically aimed at aged care facilities but is equally appropriate for home use.

"Medication management is a major concern for someone living with Parkinson's and their families; ensuring adherence is key to improving the quality of life for patients," said Gerard Stevens AM, Managing Director of Webstercare.

"The Parkinson's Webster-pak is particularly useful in aged-care facilities where there are often numerous medication rounds to be made which can make it very challenging to deliver medication on-time every time. Feedback from the pilot was that the bright colour helped a lot as a visual prompt to give those medications first and at exactly the right time."

David Hunt, Pharmacist/Owner at Forster Amcal Pharmacy, says they use the Parkinson's Webster-paks regularly.

"Many residents at our local aged care facility have Parkinson's and it is useful for carers to be able to distinguish their medication from other residents," he says.

Mr Stevens says that community pharmacists play a critical role in Parkinson's management and education.

“These are high-risk patients in relation to medicine use and community pharmacists are easily accessible to give guidance. Many patients need to take many medications multiple times a day, and not just for Parkinson’s, with non-compliance unfortunately often resulting in unnecessary and preventable admissions to hospital. We hope the Parkinson’s Webster-pak will provide much needed support and peace of mind to people living with Parkinson’s and their loved ones.”.

The fuchsia coloured folder and colour reference is available for Webster-pak, Unit Dose 7 Webstersystem® and Webstercard® systems.

For further information or to place an order, contact Webstercare’s Customer Service team on 1800 244 358 or email [info@webstercare.com.au](mailto:info@webstercare.com.au)

Photos available [here](#)

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### **About Parkinson’s**

- The cause of Parkinson’s is unknown
- Current treatments only mask the multiple, and debilitating, motor symptoms of the disease which may include hand and body tremors, limb and body stiffness, and difficulty walking
- In Australia, there are approximately 80,000 people living with Parkinson’s, with one in five being diagnosed before the age of 50.
- Almost 14,000 Australians are diagnosed with Parkinson’s disease every year. Without a medical breakthrough, this number is expected to double in 15 years
- The total economic cost of the disease was estimated to be \$12.3 billion last year.
- Parkinson’s is the second most common neurodegenerative disorder, after Alzheimer’s disease, affecting the elderly worldwide.
- The prevalence of Parkinson’s is higher than breast, prostate and lung cancer, and leukemia.

For more information on Parkinson’s visit [www.parkinsonsnsw.org.au](http://www.parkinsonsnsw.org.au)

### **About Webstercare®**

Webstercare is a company run by pharmacists for pharmacists, devoted to making the process of dispensing and taking medications as safe as possible. The idea is to offer aged care facility staff, doctors, carers and patients ‘peace of mind’ by improving medication management. The growing need for pharmacists to tailor individual dosage schedules represents a major challenge in pharmaceutical care. Webstercare has a complete range of medication systems to help pharmacists and doctors do this.