

MEDIA RELEASE

27 February 2019

Australian companies working to offset \$7 billion productivity losses through flu vaccination programs

AUSSIE employers are bracing themselves for potential repeat productivity losses this flu season with many employees again expected to take multiple sick days to recover from illness.

Absenteeism currently costs the Australian economy about \$7 billion, while the cost of presenteeism (where employees are sick on the job) is approximately \$34 billion through lost productivity*. In 2018, approximately 48,276** cases of influenza were reported nationwide.

Leading pharmacy group TerryWhite Chemmart is joining forces with an increasing number of Australian companies in a bid to fight the rise in absenteeism and create healthier and more productive workforces.

TerryWhite Chemmart Chief Executive Officer Anthony White said businesses that invested in their employees' health by joining the TerryWhite Chemmart Corporate Flu Vaccination Program had more engaged workers and less absenteeism.

"Employers are seeing that a healthy workforce is not just a benefit to employees but can lead to greater economic return, with 47 per cent*** of companies now offering workplace wellness programs," Mr White said.

TerryWhite Chemmart pharmacist Krystel Tresillian said it was important for people to get an annual flu vaccination, as flu strains evolved constantly and were very infections.

"Influenza is caused by a viral infection that is easily spread from person to person," she said.

"A person with the flu may be contagious a full 24 hours before symptoms begin and continue to be infectious for a week after the onset of symptoms.

"This can have a devastating effect on a workplace, with the virus circulating quickly between co-workers and even onwards to their families"

Ms Tresillian said TerryWhite Chemmart professionally trained pharmacists will administer the quadrivalent flu vaccination, which helps to protect employees against four strains of influenza.

Under the TerryWhite Chemmart Corporate Flu Vaccination program, corporate partners receive coded flu vaccination vouchers to distribute to their employees, with employers only paying for vouchers redeemed.

Employees simply book their appointment online at www.terrywhitechemmart.com.au/flu and enter their unique code to receive the vaccination at a time and location convenient to them at participating pharmacies.

The flu vaccination service is completed within minutes by a trained and qualified pharmacist in a private consultation space, followed by a short period of observation.

For more information visit www.terrywhitechemmart.com.au/flu

ENDS

For media enquiries please contact:

Olivia Mastry, Phillips Group

T: (07) 3230 5000

E: omastry@phillipsgroup.com.au

Flu symptoms usually include:

- Sore throat
- Runny nose
- Headache
- Fever
- Coughing

Other tips for keeping the flu away:

- Maintain adequate fluids
- Maintain a balanced diet and exercise regime
- Get adequate rest
- Sanitise your workspace and dispose of tissues immediately after use
- Wash hands with soap and water frequently;
- Use hand rubbing alcohol on a regular basis; and
- Avoid touching your eyes, mouth and nose

About TerryWhite Chemmart

TerryWhite Chemmart is one of Australia's largest retail pharmacy networks and a leader in the delivery of frontline healthcare. With more than 450 community pharmacies across Australia, we are committed to ensuring every Australian has easier access to pharmacists and expert health advice every day.

TerryWhite Chemmart provides high-quality, accessible and cost-effective community based health care services and programs.

* <https://www.usc.edu.au/media/3121/WorkplaceWellnessinAustralia.pdf>

** Australian Influenza Surveillance Report – 2018 Influenza Season in Australia

*** <https://www.safesearch.com.au/news/growing-trends-in-corporate-health-and-wellbeing-programs-in-australia-in-2015/9121/>