



MEDIA RELEASE

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Interview opportunity: CEO and Founder of TheSocialMedwork, Mr Sjaak Vink, in Australia w/c 28 Nov

A new 'Dallas Buyers Club' for Australia?

Hope for Australian Cancer and Parkinson's patients: a new 'Dallas Buyers Club'

A new 'Dallas Buyers Club'-style social enterprise is offering Australian sufferers of breast cancer, leukaemia and Parkinson's Disease a silver lining to their treatment, by providing access to US and European approved medical treatments that are currently not available here.

Provided that there is a doctor's prescription, and that the medicine is for personal use, health startup TheSocialMedwork is able to help patients to legally and safely source and import the drug directly from the US, via the TGA's personal importation scheme.

The Netherlands-based social enterprise has already helped patients in US, Europe, and China gain access to other potentially life-saving drugs via the respectively similar personal importation laws. Their doctor and pharmacist team regularly screens for the latest, most innovative therapeutics globally, only sourcing and delivering the ones that have been approved by reputable agencies such as the FDA and EMA, produced by the original manufacturer. They are able to deliver a therapeutic to patients in almost every country in the world within weeks of its original approval—approximately two years faster than the current estimated time it takes for it to become available in an Australian pharmacy.

For sufferers of metastatic breast cancer, an FDA (US) approved drug that could slow the progress of advanced breast cancer by an extra 10 months has just received approval by the EU. The first new medicine to be approved for the treatment of women with this type of metastatic breast cancer in the first-line setting in nearly 10 years, it still hasn't received TGA approval here. A silver lining, perhaps, is that Australian patients no longer need to move overseas to gain access to it—through the Social Medwork, there is another way.

The Social Medwork is also able to help Aussie patients gain access to a Melbourne developed drug for chronic lymphocytic leukaemia that has seen patients go into complete remission; as well as an EU approved treatment for Parkinson's Disease, that helps patients' dopamine levels, shortening their "off periods" by almost two hours.

Founder and CEO of The Social Medwork, Mr Sjaak Vink, set up the ground-breaking enterprise in 2014 after he witnessed two close childhood friends die quickly of cancer.

"Unfortunately patients aren't getting their hands on the newest, most innovative treatments, because people are unaware of the personal importation scheme," says co-founder Mr Sjaak Vink. "It can also be difficult to find a provider who is entitled and willing to source and ship a single therapeutic for one patient. This is really about putting power back into the hands of patients—these people have exhausted every possible treatment option in their home country, and for them, timing is everything."



The Social **Medwork**
NEW MEDS GLOBALLY

Unfortunately a truly globally harmonised approach to medicine approvals could take decades; in the meantime, this may some patients with a viable treatment option.

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