

## Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features three pages of news.

## HIV self-testing training course

**GUILD** Learning and Development (GuildEd) is partnering with Atomo Diagnostics to develop a new online HIV self-testing training module for pharmacists.

The course will provide pharmacists with key information about HIV self-testing, and completion of the training has been listed as a requirement to supply the tests, by the Therapeutic Goods Administration.

GuildEd noted that access to self-testing was one of the pillars of Australia's HIV prevention strategy, noting that pharmacies stocking the tests would be continuing the role they play in HIV management.

## Union issues gloomy wage warning

**MEASURES** to combat growing cost of living pressures included in the Federal Budget are unlikely to tackle key factors adversely impacting workers, union group, Professionals Australia (PA) warns.

The organisation, which advocates for employee pharmacists through Professional Pharmacists Australia, said Tuesday's Budget failed to provide sustainable solutions to assist those struggling with the costs of living.

PA CEO, Jill McCabe, said that after two years of crisis and economic challenges, Australians needed a Budget that delivered real and sustainable measures to combat the rising cost of living, and declining real wages.

"While spending cash on short term one-off payments such as the small cut in the petrol excise and modest one-off payments to low-income Australians, the Federal budget measures fail to address the full cost of living pressures



faced by Australian families now and into the future," she said.

"With inflation expected to continue to rise, this budget does not provide lasting relief to families dealing with the spiralling cost of living. It doesn't reduce the cost of groceries, power, rent, education, health, and of course housing.

"While inflation is expected to grow and reach over 4% in 2021/22, wages growth is predicted to be less than CPI at 2.75%, so workers will fall even

further behind.

"This budget doesn't address the significant decline in real wages - nor the troubling growth of insecure employment over the past 10 years.

"It doesn't demonstrate how predicted wage increases would flow through to workers who are reliant on awards, including employee pharmacists, or to workers who are engaged in precarious forms of employment and are on individual contracts such as IT workers."

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### Research Insights:

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## APC launches intern assessment aids

**PHARMACY** preceptors are being given access to a new set of workplace-based assessment tools to support them to mentor, advise and train interns.

Rolling out the new tools, Australian Pharmacy Council (APC) CEO, Bronwyn Clark, said they would give preceptors greater confidence when providing feedback to interns about their performance.

“As part of our duty to assure quality, we strive to support everyone involved in pharmacy education, and the intern year can be particularly stressful for both preceptors and interns,” she said.

“We’ve created the tools to align with international best practice, and after a few months in the making, we are thrilled to have them come to fruition in Australia.”

Commenting on the rollout Christies Guild Pharmacy Manager, Adam Forrest - who participated in testing of the tools developed by the Pharmacy Board of Australia



and the APC - said they would help to formalise what pharmacists already do as preceptors.

“The tools themselves were quite neatly summarised and there were no big surprises in the sorts of things that the interns were required to do,” he said.

“It didn’t feel like anything too different, but it was nice in that it was fairly brief and it seemed quite clear what was required of us.

“It seemed like a good opportunity to formalise some

of the conversations we’ve been having more ad hoc as part of the internship.”

One intern told the APC that the new Entrustable Professional Activity for dispensing had been the most beneficial tool for her learning.

“We found it worthwhile to undertake as it helps to develop a more competent intern. Everyone is more confident that when I am registered, I will be able to complete the tasks assessed in the EPA,” she said.

## No benefits from ivermectin: study

**RESEARCH** into the effect of early treatment with ivermectin among patients with COVID-19 has found the supposed ‘cure’ does not lower the risk of hospitalisation.

The authors of the study conducted a double-blind, randomised placebo-controlled trial of the drug involving 3,515 patients with COVID-19, but found no evidence to suggest it had any effect in treating symptoms of the virus.

Study co-author, Dr Craig Rayner, who works for pharmaceutical firm Certara, told *Nine Entertainment* that the researchers “examined it from multiple angles, multiple sub-group analyses, and ultimately, there is no suggestion of important clinical efficacy from ivermectin on COVID-19”.

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## Dispensary Corner

**THE** COVID-19 pandemic has created some weird and wacky versions of Personal Protective Equipment, but it looks like British technology innovator Dyson is really taking things to the next level.

The company has announced the development of "The Zone" - a pair of noise-cancelling Bluetooth headphones which also include an in-built air purifier, with the aim of protecting both aural and respiratory health.

The futuristic gadget (pictured) includes a magnetic face visor, which aims to battle air pollution and ensure wearers can breathe pristine air no matter where they are.

"The visor channels a continuous stream of purified air to your nose and mouth, without touching your face," the company said, claiming its filters capture up to 99% of particle pollution.

Dyson's first ever wearable device, which is still at the prototype stage, is combined with premium audio technology to block out unwanted noise.

The product isn't available for sale yet, but you can find out more and sign up to be the first to get it at [dyson.com](https://www.dyson.com).



## Time for pharmacy to act on ESG

**INDUSTRY** leaders are urging all stakeholders in the community pharmacy sector to implement environmental, social and corporate governance (ESG) strategies into their business practices.

In a series of video presentations shown at the Australian Pharmacy Professional Conference (APP) by the Commonwealth Bank of Australia, representatives from across the industry flagged the importance of embracing ESG.

Blooms The Chemist Chief Operating Officer, Pamela Bishop, described the implementation of ESG strategies as being "absolutely essential for business today".

"It's going to help pharmacists to future-proof their pharmacy and maximise their impact," she said.

"There seems to be a perception

in the industry that this sort of work around social and environmental good is really costly, so we also need to be transparent about what the short-term costs associated with sustainability actually are, but also show the long-term benefits."

Return Unwanted Medicines (RUM) Project Manager, Toni Riley, stressed the need for all pharmacists to do their bit individually.

"We can't just leave it to the industry, be that wholesalers, professional groups, buying groups or brands," she said.

"We've all got to start thinking about 'what can I do personally in my pharmacy to make a difference?' And I don't think we're doing that quite yet.

"As an industry, I think we're



thinking about it, but we're not doing it, and we really need to stop talking and actually get moving and just make some little changes - everybody can make a little change today."

Meanwhile CommBank Health Head of Strategy and Insights, Belinda Hegarty, hailed the Pharmacy Guild of Australia's Affordable Medicines campaign as "a really fabulous example of social as part of ESG".

## Wesfarmers, API deal almost done

**RETAIL** conglomerate, Wesfarmers, is set to complete its takeover bid for pharmacy wholesaler, Australian Pharmaceutical Industries (API) today.

The acquisition bid received the support of more than 86% of API shareholders during a virtual meeting earlier this month (*PD* 18 Mar).

The completion of the deal will mark the successful conclusion of Wesfarmers' efforts to acquire API and its coveted Priceline Pharmacy network, having seen-off rival bids from pharmacy wholesaler, Sigma Healthcare (*PD* 05 Nov 2021), and supermarket giant, Woolworths (*PD* 07 Jan).

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