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BEEZWAX WRAP

It's hard to believe, but Beezwax is now looking after the bookkeeping for over 200 pharmacies around the country and we have 28 full-time staff located around Australia. Another milestone is that the combined turnover of our pharmacy clients just ticked over \$500,000,000 which is unbelievable. A great testament to the Beezwax staff for helping us get here but also to the pharmacists and pharmacy staff that bust their gut each day and stayed open when so many others chose to close.

If you'd like to have a chat about your bookkeeping and payroll requirements, **please reach out!** No obligations at all.

PSYCHOLOGY SERVICES

Beezwax is partnering with clinical psychologist, Carolina Farinacci. Carolina has worked with pharmacists and pharmacy staff over the past 16 years and has a wealth of knowledge in helping deal with the issues that come up in our industry.

We believe that peer support services are fantastic but often there are deeper issues that require expertise. **Find out more.**

MORTGAGE EVALUATION SERVICE

With all the interest rate rises that have been taking place recently, we have been getting lots of enquiries about finance and how people can save money on their mortgages.

So I've decided to partner up with Chris Guy to help us in this field. Chris is a mortgage broker with over 20 years experience.

Chris has some great contacts in the mortgage industry that understand pharmacy owners and their staff and can tailor mortgage solutions to suit.

Find out more.





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30 TABLETS

Today's issue of PD
Pharmacy Daily today features four pages of news, plus a front cover from Beeswax and a full page from Flordis.

Beeswax growth
BEEZWAX is now covering the bookkeeping requirements for over 200 pharmacies, with a team of 28 across the country looking after a combined \$500m in turnover. The organisation is also offering business advice, psychology services and more - see the cover page for details.

Flordis Femular
FLORDIS is highlighting its Femular as a first line recommendation for non-hormonal relief for multiple menopause symptoms. More details on page five.

Butler confirms co-pay cut in Budget

PLANNED cuts to the general Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) co-payment will form part of tomorrow night's Federal Budget, Minister for Health and Aged Care, Mark Butler, confirmed over the weekend.

Speaking at a doorstep in Adelaide on Sat, the Minister noted the Government "was elected on a very clear platform of cutting the cost of medicines".

"[The] first thing that we will be doing is delivering the biggest cut to the cost of medicines in Australia's history on Tue night in the Budget," Butler said.

"I can confirm that \$787 million will be allocated in the budget on Tue night to deliver that biggest cut to the cost of PBS medicines ever. "The general patient costs for a co-contribution will be slashed from \$42.50 to just \$30 from the first of January 2023. "And there could not be a better time for that relief for Australian households' hip pockets than right

now when they're experiencing such pressure with the inflationary environment.

"But we also know that this is extraordinarily good for their public health.

"We know from the Bureau of Statistics that as many as one million Australians every single year defer, or go without, a medicine that their doctor has prescribed for them as important for their health.

"I've spoken to pharmacists time and time again - I did again this week - who tell me stories of their customers coming into them with a few different scripts for medicines that they, or their family members, have been prescribed by their doctor and asking for advice from the pharmacist which ones they don't have to fill because they can't afford them all.

"This is not good for productivity, and it's not good for public health. "This will mean that every single prescription at the maximum price will save \$150 for a patient and



their family.

"For families who are on maybe three scripts a month, they will save as much as \$450."

MEANWHILE, in its pre-Budget submission, the Pharmacy Guild of Australia backed the Federal Government's move to cut the general co-payment, and welcomed its "commitment to explore further opportunities to lower drug prices in a budget-neutral way that does not adversely affect the viability of community pharmacies".



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New PBS listings

THE Federal Government has announced the addition of several items to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme effective from 01 Nov.

The updates include Libtayo (cemiplimab) for the treatment of locally advanced or metastatic cutaneous squamous cell carcinoma, one of Australia's most common forms of skin cancer.

Libtayo will be the first PBS-subsidised immunotherapy available to Australians with the cancer, with Health Minister Mark Butler saying without the subsidy patients might pay over \$144,000 per course of treatment.

Also being listed is Crysvita (burosumab), a medication to treat a rare genetic disease called X-linked hypophosphataemia (XLH).

Australia will be the first global jurisdiction to offer the treatment for both children and adults.

Also new to the PBS from next month will be Tepmetko (tepotinib) for the treatment of patients with locally advanced and metastatic non-small-cell lung cancer (NSCLC) with a particular type of gene alteration (METex14sk).

The PBS listing of Tecentriq (atezolizumab) is also being expanded as an adjuvant treatment for certain patients with Stage II to IIIA NSCLC who have undergone surgery and chemotherapy.

Pharmacy has a solution for NSW

COMMUNITY pharmacies can provide a cost effective solution to the challenges facing the NSW health system, Pharmacy Guild of Australia National President, Trent Twomey, told NSW State MPs.

Speaking at the Guild NSW Branch's annual Parliamentary Dinner on Thu, Twomey urged politicians from all sides to follow Queensland's lead in expanding the profession's scope of practice.

Twomey noted that Australia has lagged behind other OECD jurisdictions in authorising pharmacists to work to their full scope, adding that, "unfortunately with the great federation of Australia, NSW is sadly not leading the way in the amount of primary healthcare services that the citizens can receive from their local community pharmacy".

"We are here with a solution," the Guild President said.

"The solution that we have is to be able to use all the underutilised skills and knowledge that all of the community pharmacists, and indeed our pharmacy assistants, have to turn each and every one of the 2,000 pharmacists in the State of NSW into proper primary healthcare hubs.

"There are over 200,000 presentations to emergency departments in the State of NSW each and every year that can be avoided, if we simply adopted the scope of practice model that the Palaszczuk Government announced in Queensland.

"Not one dollar is required from the purse of the NSW Government, not one dollar is required from the

taxpayers of NSW."

Twomey noted that with NSW set to go to the polls in Mar 2023, the Guild wanted to engage with politicians and patients to discuss how to deliver better access to health services in the State, and what role pharmacists could play in the future.

He noted that conversations with

members of the public showed "they don't want to have to wait four hours in an emergency department".

"And they don't want to have to wait for four days to get a general practice appointment," he said.

"We come here with a solution... and we don't want a single dollar for it."

Ascensia Diabetes Care supports Pharmacies for World Diabetes Day 2022

In support of World Diabetes Day 2022, Ascensia Diabetes Care, supplier of the CONTOUR® blood glucose monitoring portfolio, is working with the International Diabetes Federation's (IDF) theme of Access to Diabetes Care: Education to Protect Tomorrow.

In an effort to raise awareness around this important topic for pharmacists, Ascensia Diabetes Care is offering free access to the **Practical Diabetes for Pharmacy Assistants training program**, hosted by Diabetes Qualified.

Marc Harvey, Head of Ascensia Diabetes Care Australia, commented:

"We are proud to be supporting IDF's initiative to improve education for both healthcare professionals and people with diabetes. It gives us great pleasure to invite all Australian pharmacies to access the training course [here](#).

Once participants have created a profile and logged in, they can use the coupon code WDD2022 to access the training at no cost."

Study Diabetes Education and Management

If you're a health professional, postgraduate study in Diabetes Education and Management will provide you with the knowledge and skills to care for people living with or are at risk of diabetes.



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Never be afraid to say you're not OK

PHARMACISTS need to be kinder to each other to ensure the viability of the profession into the future, an early career pharmacist believes.

In a post on the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia's Early Career Pharmacist (ECP) Facebook page, the pharmacist reported that they had suffered "multiple nervous breakdowns at different work settings" over the last decade, as a result of bullying.

"I've been in this profession for nearly a decade and in that time I've been exceedingly proud of what I have learnt, the new skills I've obtained and the long-standing advice I have received from various mentors all across the board," the pharmacist said.

"I am also cursed, I've come to accept, from the moment I set foot into the industry as a third-year student on professional placement,

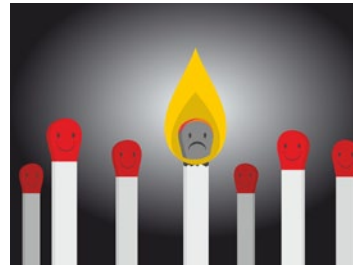
I have been bullied endlessly.

"I've been looked down on by experienced individuals when I reached out for guidance/mentorship and while I've tried to ride with the bumps and accept it as 'part of the job', each unpleasant experience at almost every job I've had leaves a new scar in my head.

"I love my profession and can always remember how ecstatic I was when I first got accepted, when I got gowned up on graduation, when I was promised an internship, when I secured my first job.

"But all of this is coming at a cost now to my overall health - I am at a breaking point and struggling to stay optimistic for myself.

"I'm not saying all this for sympathy... and I'm not pointing fingers, but my point is simple - be kind, be understanding and be supportive of one another.



"The biggest regret I have in my career was never having adequate support, but more importantly not having the courage to speak up sooner when experiencing difficulties.

"Never be afraid to say you're not OK, mental health is never a stigma and even stoic pharmacists are humans too with genuine emotions and feelings.

"Just be kind to one another, it's the only way I feel our profession will sustain over time."

Pfizer price rise

PFIZER has confirmed plans to raise the price of its Cominarty COVID-19 vaccine to as much as US\$130 per dose once America lifts its pandemic emergency declaration.

The Government move is expected in the first quarter of 2023 and will open up a commercial market for the jab which so far has been supplied under Government contracts.

The initial contract for 100 million doses saw the US pay Pfizer and BioNTech US\$19.50 per shot, with a top-up supply deal increasing that figure to US\$30.50 per injection.

Pfizer's Angela Lukin said "we are confident that the US price point reflects the vaccine's overall cost effectiveness and ensure the price will not be a barrier for access".

New minimum stock laws now in place

CERTAIN PBS listed medicines will be subject to new Minimum Stockholding Requirements from 01 Jul 2023, after the passage of legislation under the *National Health Amendment (Enhancing the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme) Act 2021*.

The changes give effect to new strategic agreements with the medicines industry, with the change designed to help protect Australian patients, pharmacists and prescribers from the impact of global medicines shortages.

In 2019 and 2020 medicines

supplied by manufacturers for \$4 or less per pact were the most susceptible to shortages, the Department said.

Under the measures, certain listed medicines, referred to as "Designated Brands" will be subjected to a requirement for suppliers to hold a minimum of either four or six months of stock within Australia.

The investment is supported the Government through one-off price increases effective 01 Oct as well as floor price protections for low-cost medicines.

UK Targocid contamination concerns

PATIENTS in the UK using the antibiotic Targocid 200mg powder for injection/infusion or oral solution have been advised to urgently check batch numbers, after two batches of the product were found to be contaminated.

The impacted batches are labelled 0J25D1 or 0J25D2, and are being recalled by Sanofi UK after they were found to contain high levels of bacterial endotoxins.

The issue was detected when four patients experienced high fevers approximately three hours

after being given a dose from one of the affected batches.

The UK Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) said anyone using the impacted products should immediately stop using the medicine and seek immediate advice from a healthcare professional.

"Patient safety is always our priority," said MHRA Chief Safety Officer, Alison Cave, adding: "we have taken prompt action to ensure affected batches will no longer be given to patients".

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Dispensary Corner

THERE was somewhat of a health crisis in a German car showroom last week, after climate protestors decided to demand the decarbonisation of the country's transportation sector by gluing themselves to the floor.

The activists are members of a group called Scientist Rebellion, and used superglue to attach themselves to the concrete floor of the Porsche pavilion at Autostadt, a visitor attraction adjacent to the Volkswagen factory in Wolfsburg.

Perhaps expecting a bigger reaction to demands including lower speed limits on Germany's autobahns, the protestors were disappointed when staff heading home at the end of the day simply turned off the lights and heating - without responding to a demand for a "bowl to urinate and defecate in".

They said they had targeted VW because Germany's national economy has "benefited much more than others from burning fossil fuels and exploitation of resources".

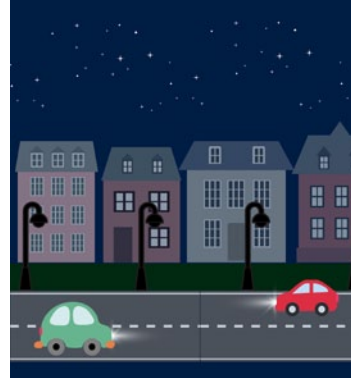
One of the protestors took to Twitter to make his angst known, saying that after spending the night inside the dealership - presumably in a somewhat messy state - he ultimately had to pull out of the protest after his hand became swollen as a result of being glued to the floor.

"Doctors ascertained the possibility of life-threatening blood clots in my hand, and recommended an immediate transfer to a hospital," he wrote.

Energy warning in UK

PHARMACY owners in the UK are being urged to develop contingency plans to cope with anticipated power cuts during the northern hemisphere winter.

The Pharmacy Defence Association (PDA) has warned members that the UK could face power outages if Russia cuts off gas supplies to Europe in response to sanctions relating to the ongoing war in Ukraine.



In a statement released over the weekend, the organisation noted that power cuts could impact the safe and secure storage of medications.

"Some pharmacists have already told the PDA that although they have asked their manager [about contingency plans], and their employer does not yet seem to have planned for this possibility," the PDA said.

"Therefore, they are concerned that such occurrences could happen with no agreed contingency action prepared, leaving the frontline responsible pharmacist to deal with the consequences.

"Many pharmacists around the world are used to practising in conditions where continuous energy supply is not guaranteed.

"However, the PDA is mindful that pharmacists in the UK have almost all been fortunate enough to never face the lack of power supply, and so such an occurrence would be unfamiliar to them."

The PDA noted that Britain's National Grid has announced proposals for how businesses and individuals can be paid for shifting their electricity use to off peak times, with a scheme whereby users are paid to "become virtual power plants".

"At a time of a cost of living crisis, PDA members may be interested in this initiative," the PDA said.

"That scheme is one of several initiatives from the National Grid to mitigate against power cuts."

Weekly Comment

Welcome to **Pharmacy Daily's** weekly comment feature. This week's contributor is **Amit Saha, M-Pharm, MBA, MPS- Pharmacist and Group Technical Manager, LaCorium Health.**



Silicone for Scar Therapy

A SCAR is a mark left on the skin after a wound or injury has healed. Scars are a natural part of the healing process. Most will fade although they never completely disappear. Topical silicone gel treatments seem to remain the first-line therapy for clinical recommendation in scar management. Silicones provide 4 actions needed for healing a scar tissue:

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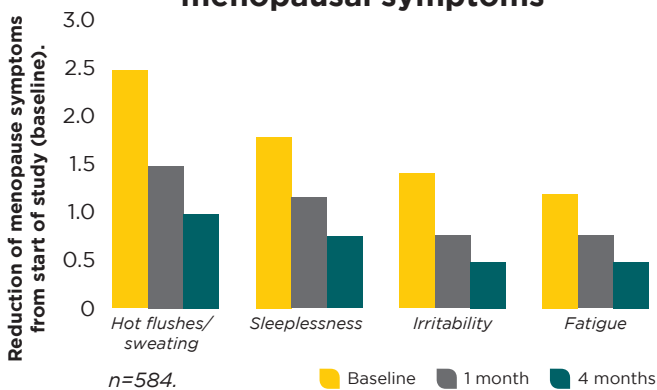
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References: 1. Lopatka L et al, Journal of Menopause 2007; 2:16-21. 2. Schellenberg et al, Evidence-Based Comp and Alternative Med 2012. Funded by Max Zeller Soehne AG. 3. Drewe J et al, Phytomedicine 2013; 20:659-666. Funded by Max Zeller Soehne AG. 4. IQVIA, national sales data Switzerland, sell-in (Pharmacy, Drugstore, Self-dispensing Doctors), turnover (ex-factory) in CHF, MAT June 2021.