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Pharmacist and Owner  
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## Today's issue of PD

**Pharmacy Daily** today features four pages of pharmacy news, including our **Beauty & Wellness** feature and a front cover wrap from **TerryWhite Chemmart**.

## Business growth

**TERRYWHITE** Chemmart is dedicated to your business growth, providing wrap-around support with its specialised teams and programs.

See more on the **cover page**.

## UK deal signed

**AFTER** months of negotiations, pharmacists in the UK have reached a deal to secure better funding and to widen their scope.

The deal, worth A\$1.2b, was signed last month and will see the launch of the national 'Pharmacy First Service', which enables pharmacists in England to provide advice and services funded by the National Health Service, stated the Pharmacy Guild of Australia.

Pharmacists will also be able to prescribe medication for seven conditions, including sinusitis, sore throat, acute otitis media, infected insect bite, impetigo, shingles, and uncomplicated urinary tract infections in women.

Pharmacists will be able to treat patients who present to their practices or have been referred to by GPs or the NHS.

To help prepare the sector for the wider role, each pharmacy will receive more than \$4k upfront and \$2k per month to deliver the Pharmacy First service.

The Chief Executive of Community Pharmacy England, Janet Morrison, described the agreement as a "huge positive" for the sector.

"It will allow new money to flow into pharmacies, and creates the building blocks for a clinical future."

# Six POTY finalists ready for APP2024

**THE** Pharmacy Guild of Australia has revealed the six finalists for the 2024 Guild Pharmacy of the Year Awards (**PD** breaking news yesterday).

With NSW leading the pack, the finalists are: Emerton Amcal Pharmacy, NSW; Priceline Pharmacy Kincumber, NSW; Narrabri Pharmacy, NSW; Chemist Discount Centre Gosnells, WA; Colonnades TerryWhite Chemmart, SA; and Capital Chemist Southlands, ACT.

In addition to the Pharmacy of the Year Award, the four other award categories include Excellence in Business Management; Excellence in Community Engagement; Excellence in Professional Innovation; and Excellence in Harm Minimisation, explained the Guild.

The winners of these categories as well as the 2024 Pharmacy of the Year will be announced at the 2024 APP Conference on the Gold Coast, to be held from 14 to 17 Mar.

The Australia-wide awards process aims to find the country's foremost community pharmacy, which will be recognised and celebrated for its achievements, innovation and commitment to patients and community.

Senior National Vice President of the Guild, Nick Panayiaris, said he was impressed at the standard of candidates this year.

"This year's finalists have truly demonstrated the value of community pharmacies in supporting their local communities," Panayiaris said.

"They have shown dedication



to patient care even with the uncertainty they are facing following recent policy decisions.

"It's a real commitment to putting patients first, whether that be through technology and innovation, or good old-fashioned face-to-face consultations," he commented. **JG**

**Pictured** top left clockwise: Teams from Emerton Amcal Pharmacy, Capital Chemist Southlands, Narrabri Pharmacy, Colonnades TerryWhite Chemmart, Priceline Pharmacy Kincumber & Chemist Discount Centre Gosnells.



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## Ban to prevent dust-related diseases

**THE** only stand-alone medical research institute in Australia dedicated to dust-related diseases has welcomed unified action to ban engineered stone, which causes silicosis.

Asbestos and Dust Diseases Research Institute Chair Peter Tighe said that the ban announced today would save lives and is a tribute to the strong community and union-led campaign against the product.

"The reality is that silicosis and other dust-related diseases caused by occupational exposure are entirely preventable - Australian workers are now dying because of the market for these vanity products."

Most Australian states and territories have publicly supported a ban on engineered stone over this year, and the Federal Govt's decision today imposes a ban at a national level.



## Vax coverage falls in Aussie children

**VACCINATION** coverage in children has been declining since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the latest data from The National Centre for Immunisation Research and Surveillance (NCIRS) has shown.

The new *Annual Immunisation Coverage Report 2022*, which analysed the impacts of the pandemic on vaccination coverage in children, adolescents and adults across Australia, found that fully vaccinated coverage among children declined between 2021 and 2022 across all three standard age assessment milestones.

"This represents the first comprehensive stocktake of the ongoing impact of the pandemic on vaccination coverage in Australia," NCIRS A/Prof and A/Director, Surveillance, Coverage, Evaluation and Social Science, Frank Beard, explained.

"Importantly, it highlights a concerning downward trend in fully vaccinated coverage in children."

According to the NCIRS report, decreases in fully vaccinated coverage were greater in Indigenous children than in children overall.



"The larger decreases in vaccination coverage among Indigenous children, particularly those in remote areas, highlight the need to improve on-time vaccination," Beard added.

The study also highlights new research from the World Health Organization and US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which showed that millions of children missed MMR vaccinations during the pandemic, leading to an 18% rise in measles cases and a 43% increase in measles-related deaths globally in 2022 compared to 2021.

While there were no cases of measles in Australia in 2021,

there have been seven and 24 confirmed cases in 2022 and 2023, respectively, which were linked to large overseas outbreaks and a return of international travel.

Missed or delayed vaccinations are also an ongoing issue that has been amplified by the COVID-19 pandemic, according to the report, especially in remote areas with a high Indigenous population.

NCIRS said further investigation is needed to better understand barriers to vaccine uptake, which it said is likely due to a lack of access to vaccination services as well as vaccine hesitancy.

See the full report [HERE](#). JM

## Benedet steps up

**GERARD** Benedet, incoming Executive Director for the Pharmacy Guild of Australia, said he is "honoured" to step into the role after serving as Branch Director at the Guild's Queensland branch for four years (*PD* 24 Oct).

"It's a pivotal time for the Guild and for community pharmacy and the weight of that responsibility is not lost on me," he commented.

Benedet, who led Qld members through the COVID vaccination rollout, said pharmacists now need to push for the Qld model of scope of practice to be replicated in every state and territory.

"Bringing the Guild's vision for community pharmacy to life will be no mean feat, but I am here for the challenge.

"Our vision is to see community pharmacies across Australia become health hubs, the first port of call for treating more patients with health conditions and for those patients to benefit by saving time and money," he said.

## Hothouse homes

**MILLIONS** of Australian children are facing increased risks to their health and education in the face of extreme heat this summer, a new report from Parents for Climate and Sweltering Cities has warned.

According to *Hothouse Australia: Our kids at risk as heat soars*, around three in four lower-income households are likely to cut down on air conditioning and fans due to cost-of-living pressures, while one in five Aussies cannot afford to cool their home.

The report suggests initiatives including the rollout of efficient reverse-cycle air conditioning units powered by rooftop solar panels in all low-income households, as well in all schools and childcare centres.

## Rural Australians found to be more at risk

**AUSTRALIANS** who live in rural areas are twice as likely to die from preventable illness compared to people who live in urban centres, the latest research has revealed.

The National Rural Health Alliance (the Alliance's) *Rural Health in Australia Snapshot 2023* shows that small rural towns of less than 5,000 people, have access to almost 60% fewer health professionals than major cities per capita.

A large portion of rural people have to drive over an hour to access primary healthcare services, and use Medicare up to 50% less than those in cities, which indicates they'd rather not embark on the long journey to access medical care.

As a result, the report found that the burden of disease in



remote areas is 1.4 times that of major cities.

"There is clear evidence that per-person spending on healthcare is not equitable, and that this inequity is contributing to poorer health outcomes in rural areas," Alliance Chief Executive Susi Tegen said.

"Fit for purpose funding is critical to ensure that the necessary policy and infrastructure is in place," she added.

## Stuttering study

**INSTAGRAM** could be used to help spread awareness and correct misinformation about stuttering, according to new research from Charles Darwin University (CDU) and Michigan State University in the US.

After analysing 74 Instagram posts with the tag #stuttering, the study found that users had positive attitudes towards stuttering content and people who stutter.

CDU speech pathologist and co-author of the study, Dr Hamid Karimi, suggested that reputable organisations should use Instagram as a tool to "counterbalance misinformation, raise public awareness about stuttering, and provide reliable resources for people who stutter and their families".

## Editor's Choice: eyelash and brow duo boosts 11 star ingredients

EZZ Life Science Holdings has launched its latest product, the Eucalyptus Stem Cell & Peptide Eyelash & Brow Serum Duo.

This product redefines lash and brow care standards, showcasing a mix of science and nature.

The serum boasts an array of 11 active ingredients, including four peptide complexes, Kakadu plum, vitamin B5 for thicker lashes and brows, vitamin C for added nourishment, and the star of the show: eucalyptus stem cells.

The carefully crafted formula, along with the precision spiral brush, activates hair follicles, protects and enhances lashes and brows from the root to the tip, and reduces shedding while

promoting growth and vitality, claimed its manufacturer.

Boasting a 'tearless' formula, this product aims to guarantee worry-free use near the eyes.

Glenn Cross, Chair of EZZ Life Science, said, "we are thrilled to introduce the EZZ Eucalyptus Stem Cell & Peptide Eyelash & Brow Serum Duo to our cosmetics' product range".

"This serum harnesses the



power of the plant for better lashes and brows, demonstrating how scientific innovation and nature can intersect to deliver impressive results."

## Nail that holiday look



IT'S officially party season, and the perfect holiday manicure is a great way for customers to level up their beauty look this Dec.

Beauty Directory (BD) has handed down the latest trends, whether customers opt for something subtle and classic, or go all out with festive nail art.

From perfect shades of red to chic glitter and neutral offerings, there's something for everyone wanting to dip their toes into the nail game this holiday season.

One favourite way to tackle glitter is with a minimalistic mani, giving a subtle nod to the festive season that will suit any party look customers have throughout the month and into the New Year.

Opt for metallic hues of champagne, gold and silver.

Of course, nothing screams festive more than a classic red, but what shade is the question?

A deep red seems to be BD's pick, and you could even try a layered look with multiple hues for a custom colour.

If a full nail art design is just a little too much, BD recommends that customers could go for something timeless like a French tip with a spin, or even festive coloured dots for a hint of Christmas cheer.

## On duty-free counters

AROMABABY Natural Skincare is popping up on a counter near you across multiple, Australian duty-free retail points.

Australian made since 1994, Aromababy's award-winning Barrier Balm is not just for babies, with customers saying they use it for their dermatitis, eczema, and sunburn too.

A jar costs less than \$20 and can be kept as part of a first-aid kit when travelling.



## Rehab for blonde tresses repairs and soothes

REPAIR and protect blonde hair with the new Blonde Rehab Bond Repair system, developed by the purple shampoo brand, Provoke.

Enriched with a unique, powerful pro-bonding complex, comprising ProCutiGen bond, keratin, and hyaluronic acid, Blonde Rehab reverses hair damage in just one wash, resulting in stronger, glossier, and healthier locks, which pop with colour, claimed its manufacturer.

In a trial, after using the Blonde Rehab Bond Repair System, over 90% agreed that their hair felt



soft, looked and felt smoother and deeply hydrated; while 84% said that their hair looked and felt repaired and less damaged.

The collection comprises of five products, which maintain healthy tresses and enable bonds to be repaired at every stage of a customer's haircare regime.

The products retail from \$11.

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## Dispensary Corner

**IF** A piece of turkey becomes lodged in your throat this holiday season, experts in the US recommend against trying to free it with cola - an old wives' tale given new life through advice found on seemingly credible websites.

New research published in the Christmas issue of *The Journal of the British Medical Association* has dispelled the myth that this purported remedy can help clear a blocked oesophagus.

Cola is often given to patients when food gets stuck in the oesophagus, the study's lead author, Dr Arjan Bredenoord, a professor of gastroenterology at Amsterdam University Medical Centers in the Netherlands, told *UPI* this week.

Physicians have recommended it and patients also have tried it, yet, "the efficacy of this approach was unknown", Bredenoord said in explaining why he undertook the study.

To test the belief that cola can be effective, Bredenoord and his team across five Dutch hospitals investigated the efficacy of the soft drink in dissolving food stuck in the oesophagus.

Of the 51 patients who participated in the study and were waiting for an endoscopy, half were given sips of cola in the emergency room, while the other half just waited.

The results indicated that cola did not help.

Instead of cola, he suggested drinking a few sips of water, and if that doesn't resolve the problem, a trip to the emergency room is in order.

## AI unlocks gene variants

**RESEARCH** scientists at CSIRO, Australia's national science agency, have used artificial intelligence (AI) to further unlock the genetic secrets to Alzheimer's disease.

Using CSIRO tools VariantSpark and BitEpi, scientists at the Australian e-Health Centre have identified two new genetic variants associated with Alzheimer's disease, as well as 95 new gene interactions that may modulate the effects of variants in Alzheimer's.

Identification of variants helps to predict the occurrence, severity, and potential treatments of this neurodegenerative disease.

However, the identified variants alone do not account for all heritability of Alzheimer's and other neurodegenerative disease.

Interactions between variants, known as epistasis, are thought to contribute to the onset and expression of disease.

Up until now, variants were measured only according to their cumulative effect.

That is, how one gene in combination with another increased the likelihood or expression of the disease.

CSIRO Research Scientist and senior author on the paper published in *Scientific Reports*, Dr Natalie Twine, said some interactions between genes can protect against Alzheimer's.

"By using BitEpi we can identify these interactions and explain some of the missing links in Alzheimer's heritability," Dr Twine said.

Alzheimer's disease is the most predominant form of dementia.

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare stated that in 2022 there were over 400,000 people living in Australia with dementia and with the growing ageing population, rates are predicted to



double by 2058 (PD 03 Oct).

In 2021-22, there were over 658,000 prescriptions dispensed for dementia-specific medications to just under 68,700 Australians with dementia aged 30 and over.

Lead author of the paper, CSIRO post-doctoral fellow Dr Mischa Lundberg, said by incorporating significant epistatic or statistical interactions, he captured 10.41% more phenotypic variance than past methods.

"This means an increase in our ability to capture the drivers of disease, which is important for Alzheimer's research because by knowing underlying drivers, we can identify at-risk patients sooner, and intervene earlier," Dr Lundberg explained.

CSIRO stated it plans to continue to test and apply VariantSpark and BitEpi tools as solutions to existing problems.

For example, often genomic information is stored in "silos" - disparate geographical locations - and researchers are unable to share due to data privacy constraints, making it difficult to consolidate for higher-powered research studies.

VariantSpark offers a solution, "federated learning", where a machine learning model can be generated from siloed data sources and the insights can be delivered without need for the entire data set to be revealed, CSIRO concluded. JG

## FIP self-care aims

**PHARMACISTS'** current understandings and views about self-care are presented in a new publication launched by the International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) yesterday.

The report, *Community pharmacy insights: Supporting the need for self-care*, is the latest output of the FIP Multinational Needs Assessment Programme, reflecting country-level needs to provide evidence-based policy support for workforce development, mapped against the 21 FIP Development Goals.

The report presented the findings of an online questionnaire (238 respondents from 55 countries), short interviews, and a literature review, aiming to describe pharmacists' understanding of the concept of self-care and assess needs related to education and training.

Among the findings was the confirmation that the majority of respondents believe that pharmacists should be actively supporting and promoting self-care and are developing more opportunities to extend their contributions in this area.

Educating and advising patients about their self-limiting conditions emerged as the most commonly employed approach reported by respondents (79.4%), followed by advising on the use of medication (74.4%) and providing medicines (59.2%).

Health education websites are the most widely employed resources (44.5%), then health tracking apps (36.6%) and lastly diagnostic tests (29.8%).