



Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features three pages of news, plus full pages from:

- Wizard Pharmacy
- Melrose Health

In good hands

WIZARD Pharmacy's People and Culture team will help pharmacy owners deliver customer success to help increase basket sizes and customer retention.

See more on **page four**.

Five-in-one blend

MELROSE'S High Strength Turmeric Superblend is available in pharmacy with five key anti-inflammatory ingredients - Golden Chlorella, ginger, black pepper, turmeric, and cinnamon.

See more on **page five**.

Patients 'bullied' on brand substitution

THE Australian Thyroid Foundation (ATF) has slammed pharmacists as it continues to receive complaints from patients being given a different brand of medication than what they usually take and have been prescribed.

"Patients are often confronted and, in some cases, bullied into taking a brand the pharmacist has chosen to stock, instead of the patient's original brand, and the one that works for them.

"Pharmacists are not thyroid specialists, do not know the patient's medical history or diagnosed thyroid disorder, and therefore, should do what they are there for, to dispense a prescribed medication," the ATF stressed.

Pharmacist regulations have changed this year to permit the dispensing of bio-equivalent formulas of medications to patients on a generic basis when the 'Brand Substitution Box' has not been ticked on a prescription.

The ATF claimed that it is now



becoming a "serious problem", as pharmacists quite often change brands/formulas, without consulting first with patients; patients can be told their original brand has been discontinued; patients can be told their thyroid medication no longer needs refrigeration when given a different brand/formula to the one they usually take; and patients are not told that while certain brands/formulas are listed as being biologically equivalent it does not mean they are interchangeable in any given patient.

"They [generic brands] are not all the same, even though they may be listed on the Pharmaceutical Benefits List as being biologically

equivalent!" the ATF emphasised - despite doctors having the ability to deny brand substitution by ticking the appropriate box on the script.

The active ingredient of brands or formulas can vary from one brand to another, as can the excipients and, therefore, "they are not all the same, which pharmacists should know," the ATF said.

Patients have a choice of brand, which their treating doctor has prescribed based on their medical history, diagnosis and performance of a particular brand or formula.

"This must continue to be respected by pharmacists to ensure patients continue to benefit, feel well and their thyroid health is not compromised," the ATF added.

The ATF recommended patients should continue on their original brand as the prescribed brand of levothyroxine is made on a patient's diagnosed condition

The Pharmacy Guild was offered the opportunity to comment and has declined at this time.

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COC new option

PHARMACISTS are being presented with a new option in the combined oral contraceptive (COC) space - Nextstellis, a combination of a low impact, natural oestrogen with unique selective activity (estetrol, E4) and drospirenone.

COC pills are frequently dispensed in pharmacy, yet they are potentially high-risk medications to dispense due to the different combinations and doses of oestrogens and progestogens.

To assist pharmacists to better understand the available COCs, GuildEd and the Australasian College of Pharmacy have announced the availability of a new course titled 'Nextstellis (estetrol/drospirenone) - Looking for what's NEXT in contraception?' funded by Mayne Pharma, the distributor of Nextstellis.

Nominations are open for PATY 2023

NOMINATIONS for the prestigious Pharmacy Guild of Australia/Maxigesic Pharmacy Assistant of the Year Award (PATY) 2023 are now open.

Employers as well as community pharmacy colleagues are being encouraged to submit a nomination.

The PATY award recognises and celebrates the best of the best in Australian community pharmacy for leadership, innovation, and community service.

Terri Bakker (pictured), the winner of the PATY 2022 award, put herself forward last year by self-nominating and said it's an excellent exercise in evaluating the positive contributions you make as a community pharmacy assistant.

"I love a challenge and PATY provided that extra push I needed to step outside my comfort zone and think of what makes me a leader within my community and industry," Bakker enthused.

"PATY has also given me more



confidence in my career as a pharmacy assistant, to further pursue different elements within community pharmacy."

The PATY Award, now in its 17th year, is the premier award for pharmacy assistants in Australia.

Bakker was awarded as the national winner from more than 170 PATY Award entries,

64 finalists, and eight State and Territory winners.

The PATY 2023 winner will receive a \$5,000 cash prize as well as flight, travel and accommodation packages to attend APP2024, and the PA conferences this year and next year to support their career and professional development as a pharmacy assistant.

Employers and community pharmacy colleagues are also encouraged to nominate a pharmacy assistant through a third-party nomination.

The PATY 2023 national winner will be announced on 01 Sep at the gala dinner at the Pharmacy Assistants National Conference (31 Aug - 02 Sep, Hyatt Regency, Sydney) held in conjunction with Pharmacy Connect, an annual Pharmacy Guild event for pharmacists, pharmacy owners, pharmacy group executives, students, interns and industry representatives.

To nominate [CLICK HERE](#).



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Dispensary Corner

WHEN mining company Rio Tinto reported last week that one of their Caesium-137 radioactive capsules had gone missing, Western Australian authorities faced a seemingly impossible task, BBC reported. They had to locate a pea-sized capsule anywhere along a 1,400km route stretching from the Gudai-Darri mine in the north of the state to a depot just north of Perth's CBD. Caesium-137 capsules are commonly used in radiation gauges in mining to measure the density of certain materials. But if you come into contact with one, it can cause severe burns and expose you to the equivalent of 10 X-rays per hour. So an urgent health warning was issued to notify the public about the risk posed: Stay away. "It emits both beta rays and gamma rays so if you have it close to you, you could either end up with skin damage including skin burns," the state's Chief Health Officer Andy Robertson warned. Authorities were concerned the capsule may have been lodged in the tyre of a passing car. Every possible resource was thrown at finding what was a needle in a haystack, but ultimately science won the day. After several days with specialised equipment stuck out the window of a car as it drove around at 70km/h, the people inside picked up the unique gamma radiation signal emitted by the capsule. And there it was on the side of the road!

Single dose for Gardasil

AUSTRALIA has moved from two doses to a single dose of the Gardasil 9 human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine for routine immunisation of young people under the National Immunisation Program, the Health Minister Mark Butler has announced.

The free catch-up program for young people who have missed vaccination has also been extended from the current 19 years to people under 26 years of age.

Young people (except those who are immunocompromised) who receive a single dose before 26 years of age are now considered fully vaccinated and don't need further doses.

Butler remarked that "many young people will be happy to only receive one jab instead of two."

"A single dose is considered by the experts to be just as effective in preventing HPV infection."

"This will make it easier to protect young people from the range of cancers and diseases caused by HPV and help eliminate cervical cancer in Australia."

"If you're a 20 to 26 year old and haven't had an HPV vaccine and you're now funded to catch up, now is the time to get the jab and protect yourself," Butler concluded.

The change is based on the latest international scientific and clinical evidence which shows a single dose gives comparable protection against HPV infection in healthy young people.

It is supported by the Government's expert advisory group, the Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation, the World Health Organization immunisation expert group and the United Kingdom's immunisation expert group.

The HPV vaccine is free through



the school immunisation programs for children aged 12-13 years.

Catch-up vaccination is provided through immunisation clinics at schools or through a general practitioner, community pharmacy or other primary care providers.

PAH access

ACCESS to Pulmonary Arterial Hypertension (PAH) medicines has improved as an outcome of the Post-market Review of PAH medicines.

Effective now, PAH patients with World Health Organization Functional Class (FC) III or IV symptoms have access to endothelin receptor antagonist (ERA) and prostanoid medicines for dual therapy.

Patients with WHO FC IV symptoms have access to ERA, prostanoid and phosphodiesterase-5 inhibitor medicines for triple therapy.

Further information is available in the Plain Language Summary for the PMR of PAH medicines.

For a more detailed understanding of PAH medicines on the PBS **CLICK HERE**.

Guild Update

50 Years of helping pharmacists navigate

IF A pharmacy practice was a car, then you'd find the *Guild Digest* in the glove box.

The *Digest* has been helping pharmacy owners navigate the financial landscape of their business for 50 years.

Now as we get back into the driver's seat for 2023, it's a timely reminder that the *Digest* is there to give you the insights you need to keep your pharmacy on the right road.

The *Guild Digest* is THE publication to help pharmacy owners and their financial advisers with unrivalled data examining the financial performance of their practice.

Not only is the *Digest* an invaluable tool for pharmacists it is also used by banks and financial advisers in assisting pharmacy owners meet their financial challenges in an ever-changing environment.

The *Digest* is available to members only.

So, if you're a Pharmacy owner and Guild member and you haven't familiarised yourself with the *Digest*, now is the time.

To learn more simply [click here](#).

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Our **People and Culture** team work with our pharmacy teams to improve engagement and culture throughout our network.

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We provide professional development to all team members that drives behavioural change designed to empower your team and deliver better customer and patient experience.

By delivering what we refer to as **Customer Success**, we see enhanced customer experience, larger basket sizes and higher customer retention.

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