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## Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features two pages of news.

### Cardio drug trial

**FINDINGS** in a large pragmatic trial of thiazide diuretics, published in *The New England Journal of Medicine*, showed patients who received chlorthalidone did not have a lower occurrence of major cardiovascular outcome events, or non-cancer-related deaths, compared to patients who received hydrochlorothiazide.

A total of 13,523 patients underwent randomisation.

The mean age was 72 years.

Hydrochlorothiazide at a dose of 25mg per day had been prescribed in 12,781 patients (94.5%).

The mean baseline systolic blood pressure in each group was 139mmHg.

At a median follow-up of 2.4 years, there was little difference in the occurrence of primary-outcome events between the chlorthalidone group (702 patients [10.4%]) and the hydrochlorothiazide group (675 patients [10.0%]) (hazard ratio, 1.04; 95% confidence interval, 0.94 to 1.16; P=0.45).

There were no between-group differences in the occurrence of any of the components of the primary outcome. The incidence of hypokalemia was higher in the chlorthalidone group.

## Loyalty program is 8m and counting



**PRICELINE** Pharmacy's Sister Club has signed up its 8 millionth member, reinforcing its position as Australia's largest health and beauty loyalty program.

The milestone sign up was performed by an unsuspecting but delighted team member at Priceline Pharmacy Ashgrove in Brisbane.

The Sister Club provides members year-round perks, prizes and gifts for shopping at Priceline.

As members advance through the three tiers - Sister Club, Diamond and Pink Diamond - they unlock greater benefits.

Priceline Pharmacy stores benefit from strong customer loyalty and direct access to customers year-round through personalised communications.

Priceline Pharmacy General Manager Andrew Vidler said the Sister Club, which turned 21 last year, is a jewel in the Priceline crown.

"The evidence is clear - Sister Club members shop more frequently at Priceline and spend more during

each visit than non-members.

"They are the most loyal customers you'll find in retail pharmacy, yet no other pharmacy brand can offer franchisees access to a customer base like it," he said.

Ahmed Sawan, franchise partner of Priceline Pharmacy Woonona in New South Wales - and Priceline Pharmacy Store of the Year 2021 - said the Sister Club is a major contributor to business success.

The 50-years-plus pharmacy made the switch to Priceline in 2016.

"The Sister Club is absolute gold for our business.

"Over 60 per cent of our retail foot traffic is comprised of Sister Club members and 65 per cent of our retail sales are from Sister Club members.

"It's an essential ingredient for the success of our store," he said.

To celebrate the milestone, Priceline is offering Sister Club members the chance to win a share of 8 million Sister Club Points if they spend \$150 at Priceline between 05 and 17 Jan 2023.

Two thousand members will win 4,000 points each, or equivalent to \$50 value.

Recently, Priceline was acquired by Wesfarmers and may join its OnePass program for more member benefits (PD 09 Dec 2022).



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## Dispensary Corner

**EXCESS** fat is usually seen as the culprit for clogged arteries - but the same problem occurred on a much larger scale in Wisconsin, USA after a fire in a dairy plant.

The blaze apparently started in a storage room full of butter, which was impacted by the extreme heat - causing the contents to melt and flow through the building as it went up in flames.

The local fire department in Portage confirmed that "the butter runoff and heavy smoke slowed access to the structure" but the outbreak was eventually contained after several hours.

Emergency workers also deployed booms and "other absorbents" in an attempt to soak up the liquid butter, but despite their best efforts, the lusciously rich runoff seeped into storm drains and a nearby canal, blocking the waterway as the dairy product cooled.

Some wits postulated that if lobsters live in the canal they could potentially be caught already steeped in butter.

## Fans at night a no?

**USING** a fan at night can be of concern to those who suffer from allergies, asthma, or other lung conditions.

"Fans can circulate dust and other small particles that are present in the room and sitting on the fan blades," said Dr Xuan Han, a pulmonologist at Tufts Medical Center, Boston, US.

"And if patients set up their fan with the window open, it may suck in pollen that may cause hayfever."

## Aussies on FIP ECPG team

**THE** International Pharmaceutical Federation has confirmed the 2023 members of its Early Career Pharmacist Group (ECPG) steering committee and subcommittee, which this year includes four Australian pharmacists.

Kate Wang from Alfred Health and RMIT University is the Academic Pharmacy Section Liaison, while Erin Cooper from Capital Chemist Wanniasa in the ACT - and former National Australian Pharmacy Students' Association President - is responsible for Congress Liaison, a key role given that this year the highly anticipated FIP World Congress is taking place in Australia.

Also on board is Amelia McLeod who is Leadership Development Coordinator in the FIP ECPG Projects team, as well as the University of South Australia's Sherilyn Wong, who is Publications Coordinator on the ECPG Public Relations team.

The ECPG aims to encourage



young pharmacists to get more involved with FIP and to network with other pharmacists globally.

The 81st FIP World Congress of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences is scheduled to take place 24-28 Sep in Brisbane, with the theme "Pharmacy building a sustainable future for healthcare - aligning the goals".

More at [brisbane2023.fip.org](https://brisbane2023.fip.org).

## PBAC to look at opioid reforms

**THE** Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee will consider the impact of the 01 Jun 2020 regulatory forms and associated PBS listing changes for opioid analgesics at its next meeting in Mar this year.

A revised agenda for the gathering was released yesterday, including notice that the PBAC will look at a new report from the Drug Utilisation Subcommittee relating to the revisions which saw wide-ranging amendments to restriction requirements and arrangements for increased quantities and repeats.

The changes meant opioid medications became available in smaller quantities with no repeats for the treatment of non-chronic pain, in response to concerns about high levels of hospitalisations and deaths due to prescription opioids.

## Data all deleted

**THE** Federal Health Department has confirmed that its COVIDSafe app has now been totally decommissioned, with all versions no longer functional.

An update from Health Minister Mark Butler this week also noted that "all COVIDSafe app data has now been deleted from the National COVIDSafe Data Store", with users advised to delete the app from smartphones.

In addition the Government's WhatsApp Channel for COVID-19 has been decommissioned and is no longer functional.

## Risk to bub from diabetes in pregnancy

**DOES** diabetes during pregnancy increase the risk of neurodevelopmental conditions?

New research published in *Developmental Medicine & Child Neurology* has revealed a link between maternal diabetes during pregnancy and a range of neurodevelopmental conditions in children - including autism, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, developmental delay, intellectual disability, cerebral palsy, and epilepsy.

The retrospective study included 877,233 children born between 2004 and 2008 in Taiwan whose mothers had type

1, type 2, or gestational diabetes during pregnancy.

Type 1 diabetes was associated with an increased risk of developmental delay, intellectual disability, and epilepsy in children.

Type 2 diabetes was associated with an increased risk of autism spectrum disorder, ADHD, developmental delay, intellectual disability, cerebral palsy, and epilepsy.

Gestational diabetes was associated with an increased risk of autism spectrum disorder, ADHD, and developmental delay, the study's authors said.