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[^]2022 Priceline Pharmacy data.



Interim Barometer report

AFTER the announcement of the 60DD policy in the Budget, the UTS Barometer Interim Report taken in May shows community pharmacists' confidence in their profession has completely plummeted to just 60.8 out of 200, the lowest to date since the Barometer started, when just in Nov 2022 the 12th UTS Barometer Report took the pulse of community pharmacy and found a healthy optimism at 146.8 out of 200 (*PD* Breaking News yesterday).

Out of the 216 pharmacy owners and managers who were interviewed just under 10% of community pharmacists predict that the value of their pharmacies will increase, a huge 71.8% said their pharmacies would decrease in value, and 16.2% remain unchanged from last year.

This is the opposite of last year when over half of pharmacists

(55%) were optimistic about increases in the value of their stores, with just 10% thinking that their pharmacies would decrease in value, and 31% remaining unchanged.

Another alarming statistic from the former Head of Pharmacy School Charlie Benrimoj who was presenting the report, is that one-third are considering leaving community pharmacy employment, of which 36% are employed pharmacists and 31% are pharmacy managers or pharmacists-in-charge.

Nearly two-thirds want to stay employed in community pharmacy.

Benrimoj added that just "increasing wages is not going to cut it" to retain the workforce, as "we really are at the lowest point, the Barometer has found".

The timing of the next UTS Barometer Interim Report is still to be finalised.

US OTC oral pill

THE FDA yesterday approved Perrigo's Opill (norgestrel) for OTC use, making it the first hormonal oral contraceptive available in the US without a prescription.

Patrizia Cavazzoni, Director of the FDA's Center for Drug Evaluation and Research said, as roughly half the 6.1 million pregnancies in the US each year are unplanned, the OTC approval "is expected to remove barriers to access and reduce the risk of unintended pregnancies".

Support in Asia

THE Federal Government is investing \$13.3m in S.E Asia including \$1.3m towards the Indonesia-Australia Contaminated Medicines and Vaccines Program, to help address the systemic regulatory challenges of substandard and falsified medicines.

Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features three pages of the latest news, plus a full page from **Pharmacium**.

It's not a gateway

YOUNG adults prescribed stimulant-based drugs for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder such as Ritalin are no more likely than their peers to abuse other drugs, found a US study **HERE**, but those misusing were more likely to.



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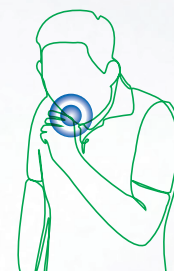


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Temporary plan

THE 01 Jul PBS Schedule included approved changes to the listings of the form "budesonide 400 microgram/actuation + formoterol (eformoterol) fumarate dihydrate 12 microgram/actuation powder for inhalation", for the purpose of allowing pharmacy substitution between brands marketed as a single-inhaler pack (13258T) and brands marketed as a two-inhaler pack (11301T).

The related data files omitted an amendment to the data for item 11301T.

The omission will be rectified with the release of new Schedule data for 01 Aug.

In the interim, Services Australia has implemented a temporary PBS authority approval number that will allow an 'increased quantity' of two to be submitted and claimed for this item.

DCO opens 100th store



DIRECT Chemist Outlet (DCO) has officially opened its 100th store in Reservoir, Victoria.

Acting General Manager Irene Vergos and Managing Pharmacist Loay Yousif cut the ribbon to commemorate the milestone on Sat 08 Jul and hosted a family-friendly day of activity for the community, at the store located at Summer Hill Shopping Centre, Shop 13, 850 Plenty Rd, offering

exclusive promotions, discounts on a range of healthcare and wellness products, and a prize pool valued at \$20,000.

The event was designed to thank DCO customers for their support over the years, and families enjoyed a range of activities throughout the day including free fairy floss, balloon twisting, a sausage sizzle, character appearances, face painting, popcorn & a petting zoo.

On the ground woes from 6oDD

KAVITA Nandan, who runs Chemist Discount Centre Endeavour Hills in Victoria, said the Henry Egan report's findings reflected the situation on the ground in her community.

"This policy will negatively impact my patients in Endeavour Hills," Nandan said.

"As a result of these changes, I am going to need to review the hours of operation and the services, like blood pressure checks, Dose Administration Aid services and deliveries that my pharmacy provides.

"And it's the most vulnerable patients that will be affected.

"I don't want to be in a position of closing earlier and not being there for my patients when they need vital medicine & support, and I'm calling on the Federal Govt to rethink this policy and put patients first."

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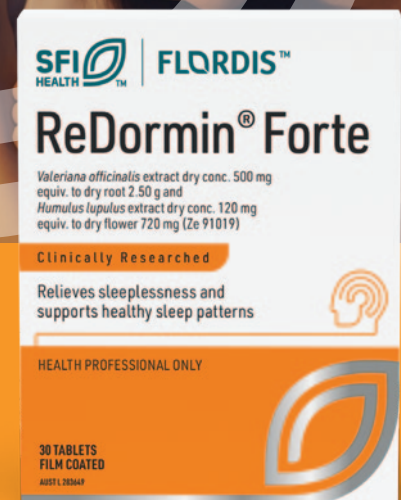
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¹Koetter U, et al., *Phytother Res.* 2007;21:847-851. ²Fussel A, et al., *Eur J Med Res.* 2000;5:385-390.

³Lataster MJ, et al., *Notabene Medici.* 1996;4:182-185.



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Dispensary Corner

DINERS of a new Burger King offering in Thailand probably won't need to take calcium supplements, with the release of what's been branded as "the real cheeseburger" causing a sensation this week.

The item (pictured) is a meat-free burger alternative which involves simply slapping 20 slices of cheese between two sesame seed buns.

Social media has apparently gone crazy with people posting videos of themselves eating the dairy goodness, with Burger King confirming online that "this is no joke, this is for real".



Surging bird flu cases

THREE United Nations agencies on Wed warned that an ongoing rise in avian flu outbreaks globally have raised concerns that the virus might adapt to infect humans more easily, and urged countries to strengthen disease surveillance and improve hygiene at poultry farms, *Reuters* has reported.

Earlier this year, a new H5N1 strain of bird flu that is highly contagious among wild birds explosively spread to new geographical regions, infecting and killing a variety of mammal species and raising fears of a pandemic among humans.

However, only about half a dozen cases in people who had close contact with infected birds have been reported to the World Health Organization (WHO), and most of those have been mild.

"We encourage all countries to increase their ability to monitor these viruses and to detect any human cases," said Dr Sylvie Briand, the Director of Epidemic and Pandemic Preparedness and Prevention at the WHO.

The WHO, along with the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization and the World Organisation for Animal Health said



countries should work together across sectors to save as many animals as possible and to protect people.

The agencies also noted that countries need to share genetic data of viruses from humans and animals in publicly accessible databases.

About 10 countries have reported cases of avian flu outbreaks in both land and sea mammals since 2022, including in farmed mink in Spain, seals in the United States of America, and sea lions in Peru and Chile.

1 in 12 still smoke

AROUND one in 12 or 8.3% of women giving birth in 2021 smoked during the first 20 weeks of pregnancy, with almost three-quarters of these women continuing to smoke after the first 20 weeks of pregnancy, found a new report released by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

The *National Core Maternity Indicators* (NCMI) report covers data for the majority of women who gave birth in Australia from 2004 to 2021 and is grouped into three broad topic areas - antenatal period, labour and birth, and birth outcomes.

The proportion of women reporting smoking in the first 20 weeks of pregnancy generally declined with increasing age, with women younger than 20 having the highest smoking rates (32% in 2021); and was highest for women living in areas of most disadvantage and in Very Remote areas and lowest for those in least disadvantage and major cities.

To learn more on maternal indicators **CLICK HERE**.

Support for pharmacists needed: SHPA

THE Society of Hospital Pharmacists Australia (SHPA) supports the investment of more than \$24b in the delivery of health services in Qld, announced in the state's budget recently.

Released by Qld Treasurer, Cameron Dick, the Budget 2023-24 includes \$10b for hospital bed capacity and \$2.9b towards reducing ambulance ramping, addressing pressures on emergency depts, as well as

those that boost women's and mental healthcare.

SHPA President Tom Simpson said commensurate funding for specialty hospital pharmacy positions is "critical to appropriately staff these facilities according to SHPA's pharmacist-to-bed ratios in the Standards of Practice for Clinical Pharmacy Services, to ensure every Queensland has access to optimal medicines management".

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EDITORIAL

Editor in Chief and Publisher – Bruce Piper

Associate Publisher – Anna Piper

Editor – Jayamala Gupte

Contributors – Adam Bishop, Myles Stedman, Janie Medbury, Matthew Wai

info@pharmacydaily.com.au

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ADVERTISING AND MARKETING

Sean Harrigan, David Ljucovic & Nicki Harford
advertising@pharmacydaily.com.au

BUSINESS MANAGER

Jenny Piper
accounts@pharmacydaily.com.au

Suite 1, Level 2, 64 Talavera Rd
Macquarie Park NSW 2113 Australia
PO Box 1010 Epping NSW 1710 Australia
Tel: 1300 799 220 (+61 2 8007 6760)

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