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## UK closures start

ALL 237 of the UK's Lloyds Pharmacy branches inside Sainsbury's supermarkets will close from tomorrow.

The decision could see 2,000 jobs put at risk, with 'changing market conditions' cited as the reason for the announcement.

## King's birthday honours

IN THE King's birthday honours yesterday, three community pharmacists were recognised for their service to the profession.

The Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) Life Fellow Louis Roller has been recognised for his significant service to the pharmacy profession through education and governance.

National President Sim shared "Roller's exceptional dedication to education and governance has had a profound impact on the pharmacy profession for decades.

"His passion for knowledge-sharing and commitment to excellence is truly commendable."

PSA Life Member Kerry Schiemer, a long-standing contributor to the pharmacy profession, was recognised for his service to aviation.

"Schiemer's tireless efforts and exemplary service reflect the very essence of our profession, including an unwavering commitment to providing quality care and enhancing the health outcomes of patients," said Sim.

Qld PSA member Brett Clark was also honoured for his service to community health, the arts, and sports organisations.

As the Founder and Managing Director of ePharmacy since 2005 and the Managing Partner of Chemist Warehouse since



2005, Clark was recognised for his "significant contributions to improving healthcare access and promoting the wellbeing of communities".

"Clark's entrepreneurial spirit and unwavering dedication have transformed the landscape of community health.

"His excellent leadership and dedication to serving others have left an indelible mark," Sim said.

"Their exceptional achievements and commitment to excellence inspire pharmacists across the nation to strive for greatness in their profession."

The PSA also acknowledged the contributions of other health leaders to their respective fields, namely Prof David Craik, Prof Michael Kidd, Dr Anna Lavelle and Prof Danielle Mazza.

## Victims of attacks

PHARMACISTS in France were victims of violence at a rate of more than one attack per day in 2022, new figures show, as a result of drug shortages and a lack of access to care, the pharmacist union has said.

Attacks rose compared to 2019, with 366 incidents reported by health professionals in 2022, showed the most recent update from *le Conseil national de l'Ordre des pharmaciens*.

This is less than in the pandemic years (427 attacks in 2021, and 584 in 2020), but more than pre-pandemic.

"[Attacks] rose by 17% compared to 2019, before the health crisis," said the council president, Carine Wolf-Thal.

Most attacks were verbal, but a small number were physical, and 5.4% involved a weapon.

The main reasons are the refusal to fill a script and a drop in medicines availability.



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## Today's issue of PD

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

- Nova Pharmaceuticals
- The Pharmacy Guild



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## Cycling takes lead

IN 2020-21, 66,500

Australians were admitted to hospital for injuries sustained while playing sport, an increase of 14,200 compared with the previous year, with the total number of injury hospitalisations largely in line with pre-COVID trends, according to a new report from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW).

The *Sports injuries in Australia* report shows that cycling caused the highest number of sports injury hospitalisations in 2020-21, with 9,800 injury hospitalisations - up from 8,000 in 2019-20 - an increase of 35 injury hospitalisations per week.

The rise in the number of cycling injuries in 2019-20 and 2020-21 may reflect the rise in solo sports with the onset of COVID-19 that has continued with the lifting of restrictions, stated AIHW.

## Forum to hear first-hand 60DD impact

**MORE** than 20 community pharmacists attended the first community pharmacy forum held by MP Karen Andrews last week to discuss the change to the dispensing medicines policy.

Amanda Seeto, the Guild's Qld branch Vice President said it's important the community are aware of the impacts that will fundamentally change the way patients get medicine and access support from their local pharmacist.

"What we have been asking is that the Federal Government provide a guarantee that no patient and no community pharmacy will be worse off under their new medicine policy.

"The Govt's \$3.5 billion cut will mean pharmacists will need to make tough decisions that will see some shut their doors, others close on weekends, open later in the morning or close early in the evening, meaning patients will miss out on vital medicines and health services.

"Not everyone will benefit from



60-day dispensing, but everyone will suffer," explained Seeto.

Andrews shared, "this forum allowed us to hear first-hand from local community pharmacists of the very real impacts that will flow from this policy change.

"There are safety risks with medicine misadventures with more medicines in households, and potential medicine hoarding, which can be concerning for the elderly.

"Several pharmacists said they may no longer be able to afford cross-subsidising the cost of packing for aged care, forcing the


cost of the packing back on the most vulnerable in our community.

"Gold Coasters need relief from cost-of-living pressures, but the answer isn't to push pharmacists to absorb the costs," said Andrews.

Further Seeto commented that the responsibility of administering medicines in aged care "would fall to registered nurses, and in some cases two registered nurses if administering a narcotic substance".

"This additional responsibility would be difficult to address with the current shortage of registered nurses working in aged care."

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**References:** 1. Spikevax Bivalent Original/Omicron BA.4-5 Product Information, February 2023. 2. Chalkias S *et al.* A bivalent Omicron-containing booster vaccine against COVID-19. Available at: <https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2022.06.24.22276703v1>. Accessed April 2023. 3. Andersson NW, *et al.* Comparative effectiveness of the bivalent BA.4-5 and BA.1 mRNA-booster vaccines in the Nordic countries. *medRxiv*. Published online 2023:2023-01. 4. Link-Gelles R *et al.* *MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep* 2022;71:1526-30.

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## Dispensary Corner



**FOR** aircraft the skies are up to 55% bumpier today than four decades ago, scientists have found.

The study published in *Geophysical Research Letters* shows that dangerous clear-air turbulence has increased as the climate has changed.

At a typical point over the North Atlantic, one of the world's busiest flight routes, the total annual duration of severe turbulence increased by 55% from 1979 to 2020, the researchers found.

"Turbulence makes flights bumpy and can occasionally be dangerous," said Mark Prosser, a meteorologist at the University of Reading who led the study.

"Every minute spent travelling through turbulence increases wear-and-tear on the aircraft, but also the risk of injuries to passengers and flight attendants."

The main injuries are to the head, trips and falls, soft tissue trauma, and broken bones.

The US Federal Aviation Administration has documented that head injuries are caused by the sudden jerking of the plane during turbulence, resulting in repeated neck strain or whiplash, and can cause passengers to hit their heads against seat backs and windows.

While the North Atlantic experienced the largest air turbulence increases, the study found that other busy flight routes over the US, Europe, the Middle East and the South Atlantic also saw significant increases in turbulence.

## 75-strong state finalists

A RECORD 75 state finalists have been invited to participate in the next round of the 2023 Pharmacy Guild of Australia/Maxigesic Pharmacy Assistant of the Year Award (PATY).

This year with more than 460 nominations received, Guild President Trent Twomey said PATY is the premier award for pharmacy assistants in Australia.

"This esteemed award was created to recognise pharmacy assistants who go the extra mile to help patients and who are proactive in developing their own careers," said Twomey.

In addition, the Glucojel Super Star award is a subsidiary one which recognises outstanding customer service among the state finalists, who now have the opportunity to participate in virtual state judging days taking place throughout Jun.

The state winners selected during this process will then take part in a face-to-face national workshop to be held on 31 Aug at the 2023 Pharmacy Assistant National Conference (PA2023) in Sydney.

The winners of both the 2023 PATY and Glucojel Super Star awards will be announced during the PA2023 Cocktail Party to be held on 01 Sep.

The conference has been running for 20 years, educating pharmacy assistants around Australia.

At this year's conference, which is taking place from 31 Aug - 02 Sep, delegates will get to know the state winners in a dedicated session showcasing PATY.

For the first time, the PA2023 will be held in conjunction with Pharmacy Connect, an annual Pharmacy Guild event for pharmacists and pharmacy owners.

The two events will share a 50-plus stand trade exhibition and social functions including the Welcome Reception and Cocktail Party.

Early bird registration for the conference, which saves delegates \$65 off the full registration fee, is now open.

To view the full program of both conferences and to register your staff for the PA2023, see [HERE](#) and for Pharmacy Connect, learn more [HERE](#).

## Affinity fined for unlawful advertising

THE TGA has issued five infringement notices totalling \$66,600 to Affinity Corp Australia Pty Ltd for the alleged unlawful advertising of medicinal cannabis products.

The company allegedly promoted the use of unapproved prescription-only medicinal cannabis products, including their own products.

Businesses can only advertise prescription-only medicines exclusively to health professionals and not to the public, the TGA explained.

The TGA said it facilitates legal pathways for doctors to prescribe medicinal cannabis products to patients.

Advertising of prescription-only medicines directly to consumers undermines the doctor-patient relationship and may create an inappropriate demand for medicines which may not be right for the individual, stated the TGA.

Ensuring compliance with the import, advertising and supply requirements of medicinal cannabis is a priority, said the TGA.

## Guild Update

### 60-Day dispensing battle continues

THE fight to ensure community pharmacies remain viable in the face of the decision to introduce 60-day dispensing is one of the biggest in the Guild's near 100-year history.

But it is one the Pharmacy Guild of Australia is committed to because it's in the best interests of the patients that its members care for.

On one hand, the Federal Government claims to be fixing the broken health system, while on the other, ripping \$3.5 billion from patient care to communities around Australia.

The Guild's focus is on patients and ensuring services and access to medicines are maintained, but these are in jeopardy under this scheme. Reductions in services and pharmacies cutting back hours or even closing are very real threats.

The Guild will not stand by and allow a situation where some patients get double the medicine they need, while others get nothing.

If this proposal proceeds as planned from Sep, some patients may benefit, but everyone will be worse off.

The Guild will fight this issue through every avenue possible and continue to strive to ensure that pharmacy continues to be recognised and included as a primary healthcare destination.

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