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TERRYWHITE Chemmart's myTWC app gives pharmacists the edge in a competitive landscape by ensuring their customers have more convenience at their fingertips. See more on the **back page**.

Closing the gap efforts are hampered

ON CLOSING The Gap Day 2023 yesterday, the Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia (SHPA) and the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) called for real action to reduce longstanding inequity in medicines access for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients.

SHPA President Tom Simpson says the Commonwealth needs to urgently enable public hospitals to supply medicines under the Closing The Gap PBS Co-Payment Measure. "The scope of the Closing The Gap PBS Co-Payment Measure should extend to cancer medicines and highly-specialised drugs listed on Section 100 programs on the PBS, which are currently excluded.

"Unlike community pharmacies, public hospital pharmacies are currently unable to supply PBS medicines to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients under the Closing The Gap PBS Co-Payment Measure hampering efforts to close the gap in healthcare outcomes.

"We strongly support achieving

Indigenous health equity by 2030 to be a year-round focus, including through professional development planning and initiatives such as Indigenous Allied Health Australia's Cultural Responsiveness Training, which is free until 03 Apr for all SHPA members," Simpson said.

A key recommendation arising from PSA's *Medicine Safety: Rural and Remote Care* report was to embed pharmacists within Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services, however, while ad-hoc funding provides some support for pharmacists to provide services, there is a lack of discrete funding to support the integration of pharmacists within the primary care team of Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services.

Despite this, 700 pharmacists have enrolled to complete a PSA course on providing culturally sensitive care to First Nations people indicating a strong desire across the profession to better meet needs, PSA concluded.

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Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features three pages of news, plus a full page from **TerryWhite Chemmart**.

BOOK A ONE ON ONE APPOINTMENT WITH SUE RAVEN!

Are you heading to the APP this year at the Gold Coast Convention Centre?

Why not book an appointment with Sue Raven and grab a coffee together to discuss our exclusive listings and request an information memorandum.

Or just have a chat in general, to talk about the industry and about our other services that you could very well be interested in. We still have availability for March 23rd, 24th and 25th.

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APP2023 coming

THE countdown is on with less than one week to go for the Australian Pharmacy Professional (APP2023) Conference and Trade Exhibition from Thu 23 to Sun 26 Mar.

Attendees will be able to hear industry updates from Federal politicians, including the Health Minister Mark Butler, and Shadow Health Minister Anne Ruston.

There will be international speakers including UK pharmacist and Secretary General of the World Pharmacy Council, Mark Burdon.

In the first session on Thu 23 Mar, 'Pharmacists practising at full scope - lessons from World Pharmacy Council member countries', Burdon shares lessons to assist pharmacists in understanding professional autonomy, which is enabled by independent prescribing.

Rally to Beyond Blue's cause out west



LIFE Pharmacy Group is sponsoring The Cavaliers rally team as they rev up to hit the bitumen next week, for the fifth time, to raise money for the mental health organisation, Beyond Blue.

Life Pharmacy Group CEO Michael Flannery and his team said that thanks to sponsorships from many industry suppliers, they have raised more than \$110k over the years and are now aiming to get their fundraising total to \$125k for this year's rally.

The event takes place over four days and sees a convoy of rally cars take to the side roads, dirt paths and mud piles on a journey from NSW's Mudgee to Medlow Bath (via Narrabri and Dubbo).

The annual rally, which started in 2015, has raised over \$2.5m since inception, with 100% of the proceeds going directly to Beyond Blue.

Life Pharmacy Group strongly supports the important work that Beyond Blue carry out and

advocates for raising awareness of depression, anxiety and suicide prevention.

With many pharmacies in regional Australia where the suicide rate is considerably higher than urban areas, particularly for men, Life Pharmacy Group understands the importance of checking in on your mates and seeking help if you're feeling low or anxious.

If interested to sponsor The Cavaliers **CLICK HERE**.

Get timely help

RESEARCHERS from the University of Queensland School of Public Health and Queensland Centre for Mental Health Research in a novel study estimated that up to 71.1% of the global health burden could be avoided if more referral pathways and public promotion were available to everyone with an anxiety disorder.



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500k units sold of T25 Topaz Flower

AUSTRALIAN medicinal cannabis company, Cannatrek announced yesterday that its hero product, T25 Topaz Flower, is on the cusp of reaching 500k units sold in Australia.

The company stated this milestone is a testament to the continuous quality and reliability of T25 Topaz which holds the distinction of being the number one most prescribed and

consistent medicinal cannabis product in Australia.

"We are committed to developing and delivering innovative, reliable and high-quality medicinal cannabis products that meet the needs of Australian patients" said Tommy Huppert, CEO of Cannatrek.

The company is also committed to providing a dependable and uninterrupted supply of product.

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Dispensary Corner

GOOGLE highlighted several new artificial intelligence (AI)-driven healthcare tools this week, from a souped-up chatbot that can shed light on your medical symptoms to enhanced search features that tell you if a doctor takes Medicaid, *Axios* reported.

This matters, why you ask? There's a race among big tech companies to infuse their products with AI - but the results, particularly in healthcare, can have unwanted consequences or pitfalls, like racial bias, privacy concerns and ethical problems.

The "large language model" that Google has been building for the medical world - an AI chatbot called Med-PaLM 2 - now consistently passes medical exam questions with a score of 85%, placing it at "expert" doctor level, the company said.

That's an 18% improvement from the system's previous performance, per the company, and "far surpasses similar AI models".

However, Google also acknowledged AI's shortcomings in the medical realm.

Google found "significant gaps" when the tool was "tested against 14 criteria - including scientific factuality, precision, medical consensus, reasoning, bias and harm".

There's still a lot of work to be done to make sure [Med-PaLM 2] can work in real-world settings, said Google's senior management, and they are working on closing the gaps.

Talking all things sleep



CAPITAL Chemist teamed up with Pharmacy Sleep Services to provide coffee and a screening for obstructive sleep apnoea (OSA) to commuters heading off to work in Gungahlin, ACT, this week.

Capital Chemist Group Business Manager Andrew Topp said that "the combined effort was designed to draw attention to the high prevalence of undiagnosed sleep apnoea in our communities, with rates of OSA above 10% in Australia, particularly in men".

"The outreach followed on from Pharmacy Sleep Services recent half-price screening offer which saw hundreds of patients screened for possible sleep apnoea within our pharmacies.

"Taking the basic questionnaire to the people is the logical next step," Topp said.

Pictured: Staff from Capital Chemist Crace and Capital Chemist Charnwood at the stand to ensure there was plenty of access for the public to talk about all things sleep.

Training for PAs

PRICELINE'S Pharmacy Club has new Quality Care Pharmacy Program (QCPP) refresher training for pharmacy assistants.

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You can collect points for completing activities and earn rewards such as e-gift cards.

Wage lift in UK

UK'S Superdrug group has this week revealed a pay increase for newly qualified pharmacists that will see wages rise to £50k (A\$90.8k).

A spokesperson for the group confirmed to *C+D* that this represents an 11% pay increase from its previous newly qualified pharmacist salary of £45k (A\$81.7k).

Superdrug said this will mean that pharmacists working for the group will "continue to receive the strongest remuneration package on the high street today".

The group is "actively recruiting" for around 200 pharmacy roles nationwide.

There is also a wellbeing package to help with the cost of living, *C+D* reported.

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