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FRED live chat

FRED IT has announced the introduction of live chat in its MedView platform, with patients able to initiate online conversations with pharmacy staff - more details on [page six](#) and at medview.com.au.

Pharmacy winners grin at APP2023

PHARMACIES nominated for this year's Guild Pharmacy of the Year Awards (*PD* breaking news) "once again lifted the benchmark in terms of the innovation, commitment and dedication to community pharmacy and their patients," according to Nick Panayiaris, spokesperson for the judging group and Senior National Vice-President of the Guild.

Speaking during the presentation at the APP2023 conference this morning on the Gold Coast, Panayiaris said the overall winner, Pharmacy 777 Shoalwater in WA, had "stood out because of its overall

consistency across all categories, in a field of outstanding finalists".

Pharmacy 777 Shoalwater also won the Excellence in Community Engagement Category, while Wholelife Pharmacy & Healthfoods Pease Street in Cairns won for Excellence in Business Management.

Thursday Island Pharmacy won the Excellence in Professional Innovation category, while the new Highly Commended award for a pharmacy that truly represents the Guild Framework for Change went to Ouyen Pharmacy in Vic, owned by early career pharmacists Alexander Look and Nicholas Wong.

Panayiaris said a notable feature among nominees this year was the increased use and integration of automation across the profession.

The awards were sponsored by Care Pharmaceuticals, with the company's GM Jonathan Biddle saying the support "reflects our commitment to patients and pharmacies in the sector".

Panayiaris suggested possible changes to the awards in the future, saying there could be "potentially new categories to better reflect the changing landscape of the community pharmacy sector".

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Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features five pages of news, including our **Beauty & Wellness** feature, plus full pages from:

- Fred IT
- PharmXchange
- Optipharm
- Glucojel

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Connecting communities to care



“Servant leader” Twomey hails progress

PHARMACY Guild National President, Trent Twomey, today at APP2023 reflected on his last two years heading up the organisation, noting it had been exciting, challenging and frustrating.

“Proudly the community pharmacy industry is stronger today than it was a year ago or indeed two years ago,” he said, adding “there is no doubt a ‘decade of change’ has commenced”.

He recounted significant changes, including the new Federal Government and its “iron clad assurances” that the current pharmacy ownership and location provisions will be maintained.

The reduction in the general patient co-payment from \$42.50 to \$30 was also a major achievement, leading to an annual \$190 million saving for consumers.

However “this welcomed reduction is only the first step... we need to do more - we need to get the general patient co-payment down to \$19,” he said.

“We all know affordability is critical to medicine adherence... at this level, 70% of PBS medicines would be more affordable for 19 million Australians.”

Other issues highlighted included the ongoing workforce crisis, which is a “constant reminder for all of us just how quickly the environment in our sector can change”.

Twomey noted a workforce capability project being undertaken by the Guild, including supply and demand modelling, remuneration, career pathways, qualifications, training needs, employment classifications & scope of practice.

“We don’t want to turn around in a few years’ time and wonder what the correct strategies could have been and what we could have been put in place to ensure Pharmacy is a desirable career with great employees and employers,” he said.

Also on the agenda is the creation of a Doctor of Pharmacy title for graduates who complete an Extended Masters, as a way of

recognising their additional training.

“In addition, it will recognise our competency to work at full scope of practice,” Twomey noted, also citing other pharmacy training issues including lower levels of funding for University pharmacy schools than for many other professions.

President Twomey’s wide-ranging speech also touched on the Guild Intern Training Program, which he described as “the only and best way to be an accredited pharmacist upon general registration”.

He highlighted the exciting developments in scope of practice across the country; the Guild’s aged care reform strategy aiming to support people living at home rather than “pulling pharmacists out of community pharmacies and being placed in Aged Care facilities”; and the work already in progress on the Eighth Community Pharmacy Agreement, which will build on previous agreements and learn from them, “including capturing full scope of practice”.

UK trials push

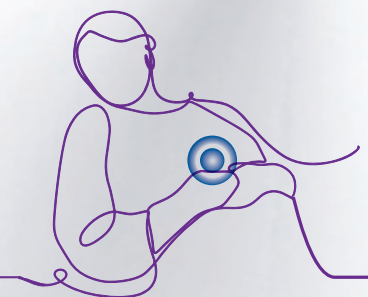
BRITAIN’S Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) has announced a series of measures which will “make it faster and easier to gain approval and to run clinical trials in the UK”.

It’s the biggest overhaul in UK clinical trials legislation in more than two decades and “will help make the UK one of the best countries in the world to conduct clinical research for patients and researchers”.

A new framework will make application processes more streamlined and flexible without compromising on safety, with a maximum 30-day timeline for the completion of an application review and 10 days for a decision to be granted once the regulator has received any final information.

MHRA said the changes were part of its “drive to be an innovation-first regulator”.

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Fake COVID job

A CANADIAN pharmacist has been given a 30-day suspension as part of disciplinary proceedings relating to falsification of his own COVID-19 vaccination status during the pandemic.

The British Columbia College of Pharmacists also ruled that the pharmacist, Aftabahmed Abdullah Shaikh, not be a preceptor for pharmacy students for two years, and have a permanent letter of reprimand placed on his file.

In a hearing this week, Shaikh admitted to entering details of COVID-19 vaccinations into his own records on the Government's PharmaNet database without actually having been immunised.

The measure allowed him to obtain a vaccine passport so he could travel, with the College noting that the "self-serving" actions could have put the public at increased risk of harm.

Sigma Healthcare back in the black

SIGMA Healthcare this morning released its results for the 12 months to 31 Jan, noting "significant improvement across several key areas of the business".

The company made a \$1.8 million net profit after tax, a turnaround from last year's \$7.2 million loss, while net revenue rose 6.2% to \$3.66 billion for the year and debt declined from \$149m to \$67m.

CEO Vikesh Ramsunder said Sigma is making progress in its ongoing transformation.

"We now have a much stronger operational platform to improve service delivery to customers, which underpins our pursuit of growth opportunities and will incrementally deliver improved financial outcomes for shareholders," he promised.

Wholesale pharmacy sales revenue rose 2.2% to about \$3 billion, benefiting from strong demand for RAT tests in the first half of the year, as well as strong sales of high-cost COVID anti-viral

medications during the year.

However operational challenges triggered by the implementation of a company-wide IT platform led to increased costs and a 2% loss in market share, Ramsunder said.

There was a standout performance for the MPS Connect medication packaging services business, which achieved 45% growth in corporate aged care facility business and 17.5% growth in patient numbers for the year.

Ramsunder said Sigma's new retail pharmacy strategy, which sees it move from five franchise brands to just Amcal and Discount Drug Stores (PD 27 Sep), will "provide critical mass to drive customer engagement and support our longer-term strategy".

"The merger of our Guardian brand is on track to achieve our targets, with around 50% of our identified members already committing to convert," he said.

"In parallel, we are rebuilding our internal capability to ensure

we have the required skillset to support brand members, grow our private and exclusive label range, and pursue sustainable and profitable growth".

The recent \$44 million sale of the CHS hospital distribution business (PD 10 Mar) will improve performance, with Ramsunder saying that while it delivered about \$364 million in sales during the year "due to structural margins in this sector it was not profitable".

The Sigma CEO said that while the company is expecting some level of disruption in the coming year as the brand consolidation and business simplification strategy is implemented, "we are however in a much better place to implement our strategy, win back customers and deliver an improved financial performance".

He is forecasting reported earnings of \$26 million to \$31 million in the current year, with Sigma declaring an interim fully franked dividend of 0.5c per share.



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Editor's Choice: born in a lab to make skin glow naturally

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The point of difference? Natural skincare that works, with scientifically-proven ingredients in blends delivering effectiveness women crave from skincare.

New to the range is Glow Lab Hydrate Bath Blend, a bath product with a blend of deeply hydrating ingredients specifically designed to boost moisture in the skin, leaving the body rejuvenated and skin feeling soft, smooth, and supple.

Enriched with glycerin, the coconut oil and shea butter based formula helps to maintain the skin's natural oils, while betaine rapidly quenches the skin, and aloe vera soothes and provides intense hydration.

Also new is Glow Lab Sleep Bath Blend, a calming bath product designed to de-stress and relax the body and mind.

Formulated with core ingredient magnesium to help soothe body aches and tension, while the lavender oil relaxes the mind with its soothing aroma.

Glow Lab Hydrate Bath Blend and Glow Lab Sleep Bath Blend retail for \$16 each for 600ml.



New K-beauty face

TILDA Swinton is the newest global ambassador for South Korean beauty brand, Sulwhasoo.

This announcement comes off the heels of the K-beauty brand's intentions to refresh its look, citing "ultimate beauty based on heritage and artistry" as the inspiration behind the appointment.

According to the brand, Swinton was selected for her "unique and unrivalled aura" and her "unique appreciation for Korean pop culture".



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The 100% mineral SPF formulation is suitable for lips, cheeks and eyes, and is fragrance-free, vegan and cruelty-free.

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- Apply your usual SPF liberally onto a clean face;
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- Use over foundation, on cheeks and under eyeshadow; and
- Perfect for no makeup, makeup days.

Glow Balms are available in three shades: Espresso Martini, Rose, and Champagne and retail for \$35.

Green Edit winners

THE Best of the Green Edit Award Winners for 2023 include: Makeup Product - Eye Of Horus Lash Lift Mascara; Skincare Product - IPSUM Skin Cleansing Oil Balm; Hair Product - Saya Argan Shampoo; Lip Product - Luk Beautifood Sweet Dream Lip Mask; Beauty Tool - Auricle Ear Seeds Kit - 24k Gold; Inner Beauty Supplement - Welleco The Super Elixir Original; Sunscreen - Clemence Organics Protect + Clarify Daily Face Lotion; Perfume - One Seed Dreamer eau de parfum; Body Product - Saya Argan Body Oil; Australian Beauty Product - Vela Days Active Compound CannaComplex Multi-Active Facial Serum; and in addition there were People's Choice Awards.



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Dispensary Corner

DENTAL hygiene is vitally important, and two inmates at a US prison made the most of the need for oral health last week by breaking out using a toothbrush.

The pair were locked up in a Virginia gaol, and reportedly tunnelled out of their cell using "primitive tools" which included the toothbrush that helped them dig a hole in the wall - in turn giving access to metal reinforcement which they used to further facilitate the escape.

After getting through the wall they scaled a fence and then walked about seven miles to a neighbouring town.

Their taste of freedom was short-lived (but probably delicious) after locals spotted them at a local International House of Pancakes (IHOP) outlet and called the police.

The sheriff's office confirmed they had been recaptured, and **PD** would like to note that when the pair face court over the daring escape they will have to tell the tooth, the whole tooth, and nothing but the tooth.

Wizard expands team for full scope

USING a proactive strategy to prepare for the eventual full scope of practice, Wizard Pharmacy has appointed a new General Manager Clinical Services, Jeff Lam.

Wizard Pharmacy hopes the appointment will ensure a greater patient healthcare experience, and organisational readiness as the industry prepares for pharmacists' full scope of practice.

Lam has a diverse range of experience in aged care services, pharmaceutical compounding, university lecturing and tutoring, and a high level of management and mentoring skills that he will bring to the new role.

Speaking of his reasons for taking up the position, Lam said he has always been passionate about optimising patient care and the experience they receive when they come into a pharmacy.

"Taking on the General Manager Clinical Services role allows me to extend my reach beyond the pharmacy counter and collaborate with other healthcare professionals to enhance the overall quality of care provided to our patients.

"I feel privileged to be appointed to this new role that will help the Wizard Pharmacy network further develop its Clinical Services offering



and continue to support the growth of our profession and the Wizard brand," said Lam.

Wizard Pharmacy CEO Lyndon Dyson said he was delighted to have Lam expand his role, which will allow the network to play a more active and impactful role in patient care.

"As a pharmacy network, we must ready ourselves for any advancement in initiating pharmacist's full scope of practice.

"With the creation of this

new role dedicated to Clinical Services, we are advocating for our profession and our recognition as essential members of the healthcare system...and hopefully attract future generations to the Wizard group," said Dyson.

Lam joined Wizard Pharmacy in 2009 as a Pharmacist Manager, becoming a multi-Wizard Pharmacy franchisee in 2014, and also serves as a Pharmacist Advisory Board Member at the Blackmores Institute.

Meet Hayley Ryan, Wounds Australia Chairperson

Understand the importance of wound care. Hear more on Wounds Australia's work with the guild on developing wound care support in pharmacies.

Friday 24th March, 12.30pm, Stand 4

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