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Today's issue of PD

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

SSSI for cefaclor

THE TGA states that it is aware of shortages of cefaclor oral liquid products Keflor and Ceclor.

The medicines regulator said these shortages are due to an unexpected increase in demand.

The current global shortage of antibiotics and long lead times for ingredients have significantly impacted supply.

The TGA to help minimise the impact of the cefaclor oral liquid shortage on patients and healthcare professionals, has made a Serious Scarcity Substitution Instrument (SSSI).

The TGA's SSSI for cefaclor declares both 125mg/5ml and 250mg/5ml cefaclor oral liquid strengths as scarce medicines.

The SSSI states that all cefaclor oral liquid strengths are substitutable medicines as per the substitution protocol provided in the table included in the SSSI-external site.

This SSSI allows a pharmacist to provide another strength of cefaclor oral liquid when the prescribed medicine is unavailable, without prior approval from the prescriber.

The SSSI is in force from 01 May until 30 Sep 2023.

It may be extended if the shortage continues, or the TGA may revoke the SSSI before its end date if the serious scarcity is resolved, or safety concerns are identified and is in effect in all states and territories.

Black market crackdown

IN THE most significant tobacco and vaping control measures in the country in a decade, the Australian govt will ban the import of nonprescription vaping products, including those that do not contain nicotine.

All single-use, disposable vapes will also be banned.

Prescriptions for nicotine vaping products for smokers trying to quit tobacco will be made easier to obtain, with stronger standards around the vaping products that can be bought in pharmacies so people can be assured of the content of the products.

Speaking on ABC's Q&A on Monday night, the Health Minister, Mark Butler, said that the tobacco industry was trying to create a "new generation of nicotine addicts" through vaping and that he was "determined to stamp out this public health menace".

To tackle youth vaping, minimum quality standards for vapes will be introduced including restricting flavours, colours and other ingredients.

Vape products will require pharmaceutical-like packaging, and the allowed nicotine concentrations and volumes will be reduced.

Butler will expand on the reforms in a speech to the National Press Club today, where he is expected to say vaping has become "the biggest loophole in Australian history", and announce that next Tuesday's federal budget will include \$234m in funding for tobacco and vaping reforms - the biggest since plain packaging of tobacco products was introduced.

"Vaping was sold to governments and communities around the world as a therapeutic product to help long-term smokers quit," an excerpt from Butler's speech said.



"It was not sold as a recreational product, especially not one for our kids.

"But that is what it has become, the biggest loophole in Australian history."

The funding includes \$63m for an evidence-based public health information campaign, \$30m invested in support programs to help Australians quit, and education and training in smoking and nicotine cessation among health practitioners to be strengthened.

A further \$140m will be allocated to the Tackling Indigenous Smoking program, which will be extended and also widened to reduce vaping among First Nations people.

The Public Health Association of Australia welcomes the comprehensive action plan on vaping and tobacco with CEO Adj Prof Terry Slevin noting that "the widespread, aggressive marketing of vaping products, particularly to children, is a worldwide scourge.

"For smokers who are legitimately trying to quit using vapes, the prescription model pathway is and should be in place.

"But that should not be at the cost of creating a new generation of nicotine addicts among children and young people."

Dedicated care

TERRYWHITE Chemmart's 'dedicated to care' support team, the new systems implemented, staff training and industry news is helping pharmacists keep abreast of changes and improve storewide efficiencies.

Pharmacists are reporting that they can do their jobs better to give care to patients all due to the support they get.

See more on the [back page](#).

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Meth-block vax

A VACCINE designed to block the effects of methamphetamine has been shown to stimulate immune responses in mice, opening the door to a therapeutic option to beat addiction.

Published in the *International Journal of Molecular Sciences*, Victoria University's Prof Vasso Apostolopoulos and her team's research on the effects of meth on the gut and brains of mice found that just one dose can cause the breakdown of the gut wall.

"These results are significant.

"Given that around

95% of people who go to rehabilitation for meth relapse and use it again, it seemed like a logical next step to develop immunotherapy, which will help them to get over their addiction," Apostolopoulos explained, having developed five different versions of the vaccine currently being tested.

PPA wants policy details

PROFESSIONAL Pharmacists Australia (PPA) has urged caution about the implementation of 60-day medication dispensing for community pharmacies and has cited several concerns.

PPA says the potential impact of the policy on employee pharmacists it represents requires further consideration, particularly in regional locations where communities rely heavily on their local pharmacy.

The Federal Govt has indicated that it will be investing more funding in regional pharmacy in the upcoming budget and "we look forward to receiving more information about the extent and nature of the reinvestment," stated a PPA spokesperson.

The organisation noted that overwork remains a problem for many employee pharmacists, and "60-day dispensing may assist in alleviating unsustainable workloads for employee pharmacists.

The spokesperson added that



"these workloads will further increase under the Pharmacy Guild's proposal to expand the scope of practice for community pharmacists.

"Additionally, the implications of 60-day dispensing for both the employment and remuneration of employee pharmacists, one of the lowest-paid professions in Australia, must also be considered.

"We are also troubled by reports that our members have been approached to join the Pharmacy Guild's campaign against the dispensing policy on the basis they will lose their jobs.

"Employees have the right to abstain from political campaigns and if you feel you are being pressured to participate, contact us for advice and support."

Scemblix on PBS

NOVARTIS Australia's Scemblix (asciminib) is now on the PBS for the treatment of adults with Philadelphia chromosome-positive chronic myeloid leukaemia in chronic phase (Ph+ CML-CP), previously treated with two or more tyrosine kinase inhibitors (TKIs).

Scemblix is also listed for the treatment of Ph+ CML in CP with the T315I mutation.

Scemblix is a novel treatment option that works by specifically targeting the ABL myristoyl pocket, also known as a STAMP inhibitor.

This novel mechanism of action offers a reimagined treatment approach for patients who experience intolerance and/or resistance to currently available TKI therapies.

The approval is based on results from the pivotal Phase III ASCSEMBL trial.

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Dispensary Corner

THE Taliban jihadists are fed up with...office work.

Transitioning from the battlefields to paper-pushing govt jobs isn't easy and the jihadists are ready to quiet quit, *TIME* has reported.

Researcher Sabawoon Samim interviewed five Taliban jihadists who find 'clocking in' for office work tedious and almost unbearable.

Huzaifa, a 24-year-old former sniper, said, "the Taliban used to be free of restrictions, but now we sit in one place, behind a desk and a computer 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

"Life's so wearisome; you do the same things every day."

"With little work for me to do," said Abdul Nafi, 25, "I spend most of my time on Twitter."

And with a 9-to-5 comes the dreaded commute - and actually having to show up for the job in order to get paid.

"What I don't like about Kabul is its ever-increasing traffic holdups," moaned Omar Mansur, 32.

"These days, you have to go to the office before 8am and stay there till 4pm, and if you don't go, you're considered absent, and [the wage for] that day is cut from your salary."

Abdul Salam, 26, says, "Whatever happens in Afghanistan, people blame us. "It's like the cameras of the entire world are watching us."

Kamran, 27, deputy group commander, longs for the simple village life.

"Many of us have now caged ourselves in our offices & palaces."

New dispensary launch

A **SOUTH** Yarra dispensary has opened to drive advocacy, education, and access to emerging therapies such as medicinal cannabis and psychedelic-assisted meds.

Founded by Melbourne pharmacist Vivian Nguyen, V22 Dispensary is located at 125 Toorak Road and will continue her advocacy work towards affordable and timely access to emerging therapies for people living with pain and mental illness.

"We have created an open environment where people can come together in a safe space to talk about their experiences without judgement," explained Nguyen.

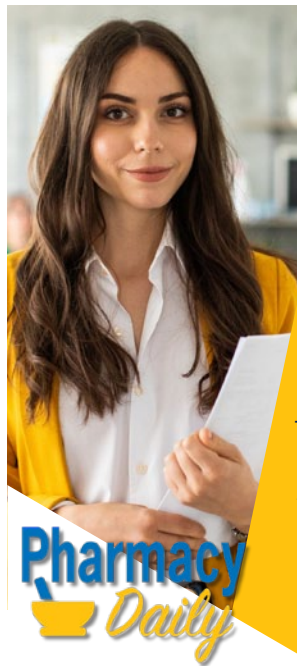
"It is our goal that everyone who visits our dispensary feels they have choices when it comes to treating chronic pain or mental illness.

"As someone with lived experience of losing a loved one to suicide, my goal is to help people living with pain and mental illness achieve better health outcomes, through advocacy, education, and access to emerging therapies."

According to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, one in five Australians aged 45 and over had chronic pain in 2016.

GPs are seeing more people for chronic pain, with numbers rising by 67% over 10 years.

V22 Dispensary will offer comprehensive support services including consultations with experts in emerging therapies such as medicinal cannabis and psychedelic-assisted therapies, education on how these treatments work, and access to treatment where appropriate.



Pharmacy Daily

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Guild Update

Minister's deafening silence on guarantee

THE Pharmacy Guild of Australia says it is still waiting for a straight answer from the Albanese Government on whether any patient or pharmacy would be worse off after the 60-day dispensing changes come into effect.

The question was put to the Federal Health Minister Mark Butler by a journalist on the day he confirmed that 60-day dispensing would be introduced from 01 Sep this year, as part of the Budget.

When asked, Minister Butler didn't give an exact response saying, "We have deliberately decided to phase in these arrangements over the course of this year and next year so pharmacists are able to change their itinerary arrangements."

Pharmacy Guild National President, Professor Trent Twomey said the Health Minister's refusal to guarantee patients would receive the medicine they needed or that pharmacies wouldn't close was worrying.

"I want the Federal Government to guarantee millions of Australians won't go without the medicines to treat high cholesterol, diabetes, depression, and anxiety, because of shortages that this policy will deliver," Professor Twomey said.

He also said about the double dispensing measure that, "Double of nothing is still nothing."

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Wendy McKay

TWC Drouin, Vic, joined in 2022



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