



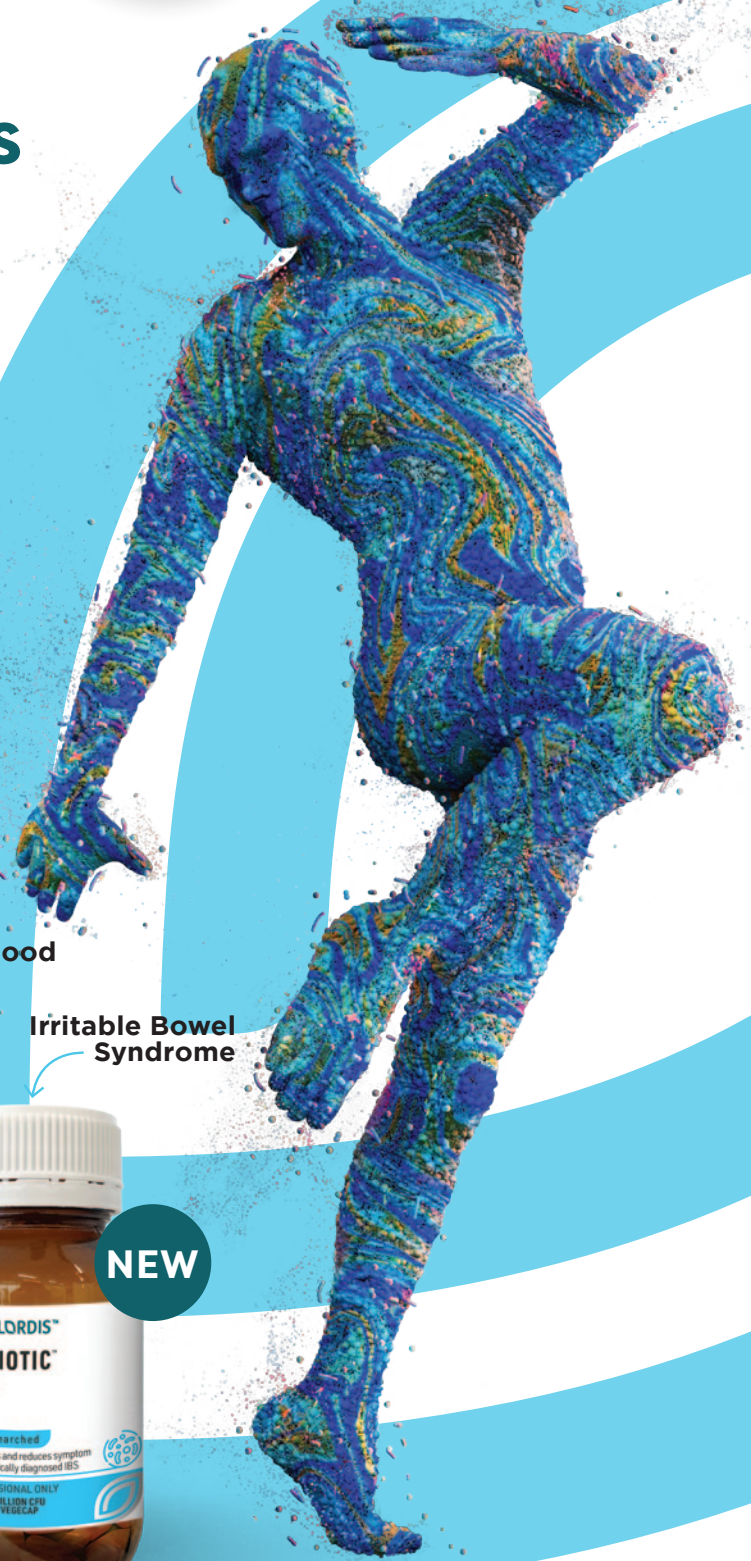
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Del Piano, et al. 2010, *Journal of Clinical Gastroenterology*, Vol. 44, S30-S34.; Reid, G, et al. 2003, 'Oral use of Lactobacillus rhamnosus GR-1 and L. fermentum RC-14 significantly alters vaginal flora', *FEMS Immunology & Medical Microbiology*, Vol. 35, No. 2, pp.131-134. Funded by Procter and Gamble, NSERC and Kidney Foundation of Canada; Diop, L, et al. 2008, 'Probiotic food supplement reduces stress-induced gastrointestinal symptoms in volunteers: a double-blind, placebo-controlled, randomized trial', *Nutrition Research*, Vol. 28, No. 1. Sponsored by Lallemand SAS.



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30 TABLETS

Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features three pages of news, plus a front cover wrap from SFI Health.

Targeted care

SFI Health, home of Floridis, has a Ther-Biotic range of targeted, therapeutic probiotics to help customers get the care they can count on. See more on the [cover page](#).

PATY deadline

SELF nominate or respond to your nomination for the prestigious Pharmacy Assistant of the Year 2023 (PATY) award, by 5pm AEST, 15 May, [HERE](#).

Safety alert for Janus kinase inhibitors

PHARMACISTS should be aware that a large post-marketing rheumatoid arthritis safety study of the JAK inhibitor tofacitinib (Oral Surveillance Study), found an increased risk of major cardiovascular problems, such as heart attack and stroke, cancer, blood clots, serious infections and death, as compared with tumour necrosis factor inhibitors, the TGA has reported.

Based on the results of this study, a class-wide boxed warning, along with strengthened precautions about these risks have been added to the Australian Product

Information documents for JAK inhibitors used to treat chronic inflammatory conditions, such as baricitinib, tofacitinib and upadacitinib, stated the TGA.

To minimise the risk of these side effects, JAK inhibitors should not be prescribed for chronic inflammatory conditions in people with a history of cardiovascular disease, nor to those at increased risk of cardiovascular problems such as current or past long-time smokers, and those at increased risk of cancer aged 65 years and over, unless there are no suitable alternative treatments, the TGA said.

Numbers crunch shows rural hit hard

CLARENCE Valley pharmacist Michael Troy from Southside Pharmacy in NSW has voiced his concerns about the changes to the PBS following the confirmation in this week's Budget about the 60-day dispensing to start from 01 Sep.

Citing medicine shortages Troy, speaking to *Australian Rural & Regional News*, explained, "there is nothing about this proposal which makes logical sense for our local community, or for us as a small regional business."

"The numbers crunch suggests that should this proposal go ahead, \$170,000 of revenue will be lost out of the average community pharmacy."

"Lost revenue has an impact on any small business, and there would have to be a way for us to

restructure, either by a reduction in staff, or a reduction in trading hours and/or open days, which would reduce the community's access to the services we provide.

"Patients will ultimately be worse off if this proposal goes ahead."

The Pharmacy Guild has come out strongly asserting that "millions of Australians who visit their local pharmacy every week could soon be worse off following a massive cut in the Budget to 6,000 community pharmacies".

National President Trent Twomey said the \$3.5b cut will impact patients and their ability to get medicine, advice and services from their local pharmacist.

"Unless the Federal Government provides a guarantee that no patient and no community pharmacy will be worse off under their new medicine policy then millions of people in every single community in Australia will be worse off," Twomey explained.

"The Government's \$3.5b cut will,

unfortunately, mean pharmacists will need to make tough decisions that will see some shut their doors and others shut on weekends, opening later in the morning or closing early in the evening and it will mean patients miss out on vital medicines and health services.

"These are unprecedented changes that will fundamentally change the way patients get medicine and access support from their local pharmacist."

"Because the Government is not reinvesting all the money they are taking out, as the Department of Health data provided to the Guild shows, pharmacists only have two options - to close or reduce hours and services."

"If the Govt wants to actually reinvest the money taken out, they will need to fund at least \$3.5b back into community pharmacies over the next four years."

The Guild said pharmacies will now undertake a review of their own financial impact.



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Apps join hands

NUTRITION and fitness app MyFitnessPal and Google Health Connect, yesterday announced an integration between the two platforms.

Those with Type 1 and 2 diabetes who select continuous glucose monitoring tools integrated with Google's Health Connect can now see their glucose data directly within the MyFitnessPal app.

"Our community will now have the critical capability to understand and visualise how the foods they eat affect their blood glucose levels throughout the day," said Tricia Han, CEO of MyFitnessPal.

"Earlier, someone could see spikes in their glucose, but not make the connection to what caused them."

Premium users who enabled the timestamp function in their diary will be able to see glucose levels graphed against time on their food diary items.

Budget funding for vapes to offset loss

THE Budget's \$234m vaping reform package has struck the right balance and critically elevated the role of medically prescribed, pharmacy-distributed vapes, Fields Pharmaceutical CEO Wilhelm David has asserted.

He predicts that this prescription model for vapes will now play a far greater, legalised role in addressing Australia's major health challenge of excessive smoking rates.

"This is a proactive, forward-thinking reform by the Federal Government, designed to protect the nation's overall health and well-being," David explained.

"Under the current TGA guidelines, the prescription model for vapes in Australia must be strongly supported by peak medical bodies if we are genuine in seeking further smoking cessation rates in Australia and stamping out the black market.

"Therapeutic dispensing of vaping supports Australia's public health agenda and makes sound commercial sense for pharmacies.



"Australia's pharmacy sector is facing a possible \$3.5b in cuts out of this Budget due mainly to the new 60-day dispensing arrangements.

"Industry estimates Australian pharmacy revenue losses through the fully implemented reforms is somewhere between \$500m and \$900m per annum."

David shared, "there is an opportunity to offset this revenue loss, as well as support the Government's public health agenda, with more proactive

support and proper adoption of the prescription model for medically prescribed vaping products.

"With nearly 31,000 GPs, and 5,700 pharmacies, an adult vaper, or someone looking to quit cigarettes, could get wide access to an Australian standard product," David said.

"An adult seeking to quit smoking should not rely upon the black market for therapeutic goods.

"A generational opportunity awaits if local GPs and pharmacies get smoking cessation prescription measures right and this Budget paves the way for this.

"Minister Butler has previously made it very clear that the role and future of vaping is 'therapeutic' not 'recreational'.

"Vaping products were never intended to be sold as recreational products.

"But it requires a collective leadership among manufacturers, peak bodies, and healthcare professionals to lean in and make this happen," David concluded.



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Mind-at-Midnight survey sheds light

JOB search platform for night shift workers in the US, *overnightjobs.com*, found in a Mind-at-Midnight study on the psychological effects of night shift work, that 73% of those surveyed reported sleep disturbances.

Nearly one-in-two had anxiety and depression, and well over half suffered from social isolation, and an impaired work-life balance leading to increased

stress and burnout.

Brandon Carter, founder of *overnightjobs.com*, stated, "the psychological impact of night shift work is often underestimated, and it is essential to be proactive to mitigate its effects, such as offering mental health support, providing flexible scheduling options, and encouraging a healthy sleep routine".

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Bianco L et al., *J Am Geriatr Soc* 2012; 60:1180-1.



Dispensary Corner

NEW technology has revealed that before being obliterated in a fiery storm of flying lava from Mount Vesuvius, the residents of Pompeii were actually a pretty healthy bunch.

CT scans have now been undertaken of some of the victims, whose corpses have been preserved in ash since the AD79 eruption which lasted 18 hours.

Archaeological excavation of the site has been under way for more than a century, and included a technique which preserved their bones inside plaster casts, which have now been scanned using the latest high sensitivity CT machines.

So far 30 casts of men, women, children, a dog and a pig have been scanned, with the early results indicating a quite healthy population who had "exceptionally good teeth" according to Italy's *The Local* news service.

At a press conference to reveal the results, orthodontist Elisa Vanacore said the scans showed a very healthy diet that contained few sugars and was high in fruit and vegetables.

The victims' high-quality dental health was possibly also attributed to high levels of fluorine in the air and water due to the proximity to the volcano.

The intriguing results of the ongoing project have also shown that some of the residents of Pompeii and Herculaneum were crushed by the collapsing roofs of buildings where they were sheltering from the volcanic onslaught.

Pfizer reaffirms commitment to Voice

PFIZER Australia has reaffirmed its commitment to the Uluru Statement and the call for a Voice for First Nations people through its Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

Anne Harris, Pfizer Australia & New Zealand Managing Director acknowledged the alignment between the Voice to Parliament and Pfizer's commitments to equity and improving health outcomes for all.

"As part of its Reconciliation Action Plan commitments, Pfizer continues to engage with its RAP Advisory Board of elders and advisors seeking to understand the viewpoints on the importance of an Indigenous Voice to Parliament," Harris shared at a company presentation yesterday.

"We are also educating colleagues

about the Voice to ensure all colleagues are informed and aware of its relevance to our RAP commitments.

"Pfizer supports the Voice, underpinned by constitutional recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders as the First People of Australian as a route to help inform policy decisions that impact their lives," said Harris, welcoming Uncle Michael West, who is a member of the RAP Advisory Board.

A person of the Stolen Generations, West is an Aboriginal man of the Gamilaroi nation and an educator and artist who has played a significant role in shaping Pfizer's reconciliation commitment, as well as increasing awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and leadership within the organisation.

"These learnings are key to understanding the social determinants of health, housing, education and employment, their symbiotic nature and the inequalities faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.

"We are on a journey of reconciliation, listening and learning from each other for an inclusive future and a more equitable society where Aboriginal children, families and communities can fulfil their dreams and aspirations," asserted West.

Vanessa Craze, Pfizer Australia & New Zealand Senior Manager, People Experience added, "listening to the stories and truths of First Nations people is not only eye-opening, but helps colleagues to connect and deepen cultural understanding."

Silicosis funding

MONASH University Biomedicine Discovery Institute's Head of Respiratory Pharmacology, Associate Professor Jane Bourke has been awarded funding totalling \$416,000 across two research projects on silicosis.

An incurable and deadly occupational lung disease, silicosis has as many as 600 cases already and is expected to rise to more than 100k across Australia.

The first project will look at early screening to see if people have chemical signatures for the disease.

The second project is to test therapeutic agents which can ameliorate or prevent progression of lung scarring characteristic of silicosis.



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