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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:

- **Nova Pharmaceuticals**
- **The Platform Alliance Group**

Offering choice

NOVA Pharmaceuticals' MediChoice offers rapid release paracetamol packs as another brand choice to the pharmacy market.

For discounts see **page six**.

PAG's Buy It Right

THE Platform Alliance Group (PAG) says its Buy It Right inventory management system can save your pharmacy thousands of dollars.

To learn more about the system see **page seven**.

Sigma: 60-day rule to hit store traffic

SIGMA Healthcare says it's still too early to assess the knock-on effect of the Government's budget decision to facilitate 60-day dispensing on more than 300 medicines, but has pledged to "continue to support our customers and work on initiatives to drive efficiency across the supply chain".

Speaking at the Sigma annual general meeting yesterday, CEO Vikesh Ramsunder (**pictured**) noted that the significant change in policy "will impact the funding for pharmacies and most likely decrease foot traffic into stores".

The Sep phase-in of the measure will "allow us time to manage the potential impact," he said, adding that the company was working with its brand members and supply chain to mitigate any outcomes from the radical new policy.

Ramsunder also addressed the recent decision to rationalise Sigma's brand portfolio which has resulted in the demise of Guardian Pharmacy, in favour of Amcal and



Discount Drug Stores.

"The rationale for moving to two brands is the following: firstly it removes the complexity of managing promotional and marketing strategies for five brands. "Secondly, consolidation provides scale to deliver the economics of a private and exclusive label strategy; and thirdly it allows us to focus on our brand positioning and consumer messaging to increase footfall through our stores," he said.

Ramsunder also noted that some pharmacists do not wish to belong to a brand, "and for these stores, we have launched our PriceSave offer

to grow our wholesale volume".

He also highlighted the broader economy and ongoing inflationary pressures on operating costs, with the company having a limited ability to pass on cost increases.

"With that said, we also operate in more defensive categories less impacted by swings in spending patterns of consumers."

Ramsunder said sales into pharmacies for the current financial year to date were up 5.3% due to improved operational performance.

Sigma's key "delivery in full" metric, which is a critical measure for customer satisfaction, rebounded from 75% in Feb 2022 to a sustained 98% and above since Jun last year, which he noted was a "strong turnaround considering we still delivered over 230 million units in the year to pharmacies".

"I now have great confidence in the sustained ability of our operations to meet high levels of customer service and absorb growth opportunities," he said.

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Long COVID test

THE first diagnostic test for long COVID is now available to patients across Australia.

The test can help physicians diagnose long COVID by differentiating it from other diseases with similar symptoms, which will enable them to design personalised treatment approaches.

The simple blood-based test was developed by diagnostic testing company IGeneX using IncellDX's inCellKINE assay.

IncellKINE is a machine learning-based technology that is able to assess the presence of a distinctive immunologic profile characterised by patterns of cytokine and chemokine biomarkers found to be unique to long COVID patients, as reported in *Frontiers in Immunology*.

The long COVID test provides 97% sensitivity.

To learn more and to book a test [CLICK HERE](#).

PSA WA Pres elect is Ray

KRISTIAN Ray MPS (pictured) has been elected as President of the Pharmaceutical Society's Western Australia Branch, following a meeting of the newly elected committee this week.

Ray is a community pharmacist and the Pharmacy Development and Health Services Manager for the Western Australian pharmacy group, Pharmacy 777.

He is involved in the development, implementation and growth of pharmacy services that improve patient health outcomes across the group, bringing a depth of experience to the PSA's Branch Committee (BC).

The WA BC has also elected Alyssa Pisanoas MPS and re-elected Ayomide Ogundipe MPS as Vice-Presidents and re-elected Dr Fei Sim FPS as National Board Director.

"I am grateful to be elected as President, and thank Lusi Sheehan for her valuable contribution to the role over the last 12 months," Ray acknowledged, adding that Sheehan



will continue on as a BC member.

"Our profession has faced many challenges over the last few years but remained strong and agile with the support of the PSA.

"I am excited to work with the Branch Committee team and industry stakeholders to continue to advocate for the role of pharmacists in our communities and across our state.

"Knowing the skills of our pharmacists gives me confidence that the future of our profession looks bright, and we are able to adapt to things previously not thought possible," Ray concluded.

Super-recognisers

WITH the help of research from UNSW Sydney, the NSW Police Force has been able to identify 38 of its own exceptional performers, opening the possibility that their special abilities to remember faces could be put to use in areas like forensics and counter-terrorism.

In a study published today in the journal *PLOS ONE*, UNSW researchers described how they enlisted 1,600 members of NSW Police to undertake a series of online face matching and memory tests.

The 38 who were selected performed well above average in all tests and were identified as super-recognisers - people with uncanny abilities to recognise and remember unfamiliar faces.

They are estimated to make up about 2% of the population, putting the 38 of the 1,600 participants in this same ratio.

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*Reference: 1. Lang C, et al., *Planta Med* 2015;81:968-974. Supported by Engelhard Arzneimittel GmbH & Co. KG.

*Prospan is clinically proven to relieve a chesty cough in 7 days vs 14 days untreated. Schaefer A, et al., *Pharmazie* 2016;71(9):504-509.

SFI HEALTH





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Lived experience is the way forward

CHANGES to Australia's mental health and suicide prevention system must be underpinned by lived experience to ensure appropriate care, say experts at the University of South Australia.

Following the announcement of \$586.9 million of Federal funds to overhaul Australia's mental health system, UniSA's Prof Nicholas Procter and Dr Mark Loughhead explain that lived experience can facilitate a better balance between the needs of consumers, carers and mental health professionals, and draws upon research in a UniSA spotlight report developed for the National Mental Health Commission.

"One of the enduring challenges across the health sector is to effectively understand and respond to the diverse needs of different people and groups," Prof Procter said.

"In mental health, this is particularly complex as we are

supporting people who have very significant mental health conditions, and we need to provide care which responds to drivers of distress, the wishes of the person, build their capacity, and enable psychological safety for them, families, friends and professional staff.

"Leaders with lived and living experience have a personal perspective and experiences of significant mental health and suicide-related issues and distress; and are able to help design and build care systems with unique wisdom and insights to offer.

"They can help balance clinical and consumer perspectives."

In Australia, more than two in five individuals experience a mental health issue in their lifetime.

In 2020-21 more than 3.4 million Australians sought help from a healthcare professional for their mental health.

'Buy It Right' says PAG

THE Platform Alliance Group (PAG) acknowledges that better management of inventory costs is required, to manage potential reduction in dispensary income, due to the 60-day dispensing policy.

Pharmacy owners can navigate the impact of this measure and generate operational efficiencies to ease the financial burden through inventory management system, Buy It Right, stated PAG.

John Kardis, pharmacist, and founder of Buy It Right shared "our algorithm-based technology automates inventory management for pharmacies, enabling intuitive real-time stock replenishment decisions.

"Buy It Right has bespoke forecasting and ordering features that integrate with all supplier trading terms and deals.

"Staff are always buying the right stock at the right time".

Optimisation is achieved by a range of factors, most notably via elimination of operational costs,

improved workflow efficiencies and gross margin growth through better purchasing patterns.

PAG reported that extensive financial modelling demonstrated that the average pharmacy will save in excess of \$50,000 per annum after implementing Buy It Right.

This is borne out by Sue Fosbery, pharmacist and owner of WA's Advantage Pharmacy Falcon, High Wycombe, and Florida Beach who shared, "we have been using the Buy It Right inventory management system at our pharmacies since 2020, and it has proven to be a very efficient program for both ordering and monitoring stock.

"Saving us considerable time and consequently wages at all stores.

"We've saved in the order of \$50,000 in gross revenue on labour costs and inventory optimisation in one of our pharmacies using the system."

PAG will provide further updates for the system's planned national rollout, and to learn more **CLICK HERE**.

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Editor's choice: Fillers at your fingertips with no needles

THE SkinDoctors Instant Effects range has clinically proven formulations that work to smooth the appearance of wrinkles, helps tighten eye bags, lift and firm skin for a younger appearance.

SkinDoctors Instant Lip Plumper claims to hydrate and plump lips in just five minutes, with no expensive salon treatments or needles required.

Results should last for about two hours, making it a useful option for those new to the full-lipped look, or those looking for an alternative to fillers.

The ingredients include 3% hyaluronic-acid filling spheres.

SkinDoctors recommends simply applying to dry lips,

starting with the bottom lip first.

Apply every two hours or as needed, and expect tingling when the product is put on, though this will subside.

SkinDoctors Instant FaceLift, claims to provide a cosmetic facelift without the surgery, working in five minutes to instantly smooth wrinkles by tightening, lifting, and boosting firmness.

The triple-action ingredients smooth and tighten for a visible lifting effect, and improve the elasticity and tonicity of the skin for results that can last for hours.

SkinDoctors say the products suit all skin types and are useful to those looking for collagen supplements and oral products to



assist with skin elasticity.

The SkinDoctors Instant Lip Plumper and FaceLift both retail for \$44.99.

Better with B Corp



IN THIS current climate sustainability is top of mind for both brands and consumers alike, and being acknowledged as a B Corporation Certified business is one of the strongest signals to consumers that brands are using their business as a force for good.

Within Australia, The KIND Collective has spent over two years to become certified, and while it's a "long and rightfully rigorous process," said its Co-Founder Lynda Chapman (pictured), adding "business in Australia can look to undertake the B Corp process to help open their business and make changes for a better future."

"When it comes to sustainable practices, it's not enough to say that a brand believes in sustainability.

"The industry needs to look at every aspect of the business, from the business culture, end-to-end supply chain, point of sale and marketing support to look at the environmental and social impact at every touch point," Chapman said.

"It can be a challenge for consumers to know what to look out for, so reputable third-party accreditation like B Corp or PETA vegan and cruelty-free helps to provide confidence and transparency that brands are delivering on their values."

Clip & trim with ease

MEN'S personal care product StyleCraft by Silver Bullet The Beast and His Bro Clipper and Trimmer are a cordless modular clipper and trimmer duo.

The clipper and trimmer feature a rotary motor, a fully adjustable taper blade and a modular shape.

Both products have a combined runtime of 240 minutes with a two-hour rapid charge and retail for \$259.95.



Keep family well with natural immune booster



ULTRA Nature was born in the pursuit of wellness and vitality, taking ancient natural extracts utilised for centuries in traditional Chinese and Ayurvedic medicines, and formulating them with cutting-edge science, in line with relevant clinical research.

One of the key products in the Ultra Nature practitioner range is

Immune Defence, a unique formula that includes a combination of patented ingredients Wellmune and OciBest plus Quercetin and Vitamin D for increased immune support and reduced inflammation.

Wellmune is a natural yeast that strengthens major functions as it helps release natural beta glucan cells throughout the body to trigger immune defences.

OciBest known as holy basil or *tulsi* is rich in vitamins, iron and zinc to help the body to adapt to stress.

The other ingredients vitamin D, C, selenium and zinc all help to maintain the body's immune system.

The Immune Defence 30 tabs retail for \$18.99 while 60 tabs cost \$34.99.

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Beauty & Wellness
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Dispensary Corner

A NEW survey in the UK has found that one of the main reasons people don't pursue healthier lifestyles is that they are simply too knackered.

The YouGov poll of 2,086 adults highlighted the barriers faced by many when they think about taking up better habits.

Asked what was stopping them from exercising more often and eating healthy food, 40% of women and 29% of men cited "feeling too tired".

Other key issues were "lack of motivation" mentioned by 38% of respondents, while the "cost of food" was also blamed by 30% of those polled.

A "lack of time" was blamed by 26%, while a quarter said the "cost of exercising" such as gym membership or buying equipment was an issue.

Interestingly, 12% of those surveyed said they simply "did not know where to start".

AUTHORITIES in the USA have acted swiftly to crack down on a Philadelphia pizzeria which advertised cannabis as one of its special toppings.

The aptly-named Stoned Pizzeria - which apparently has three locations in New York - offers a "cannabis dining concept" which also involves adding the drug to beverages.

Although marijuana use has been decriminalised in Philadelphia, its sale and possession are still illegal.

The eatery was shut down after an inspection where officials noted some takeaway orders being prepared also included pre-rolled joints.

Under-detection of Autism in girls

GIRLS with autism tend to be diagnosed later than boys, largely because they can present with different characteristics than those classically related to autism.

This means that they may not receive the supports they need.

Researchers at Flinders University have found that under-detection of autism in girls may be partly driven by differences in the way they typically present compared to boys.

In addition, clinicians have a restricted conceptualisation of how autism can be expressed, often using tools designed around a male presentation.

"Tools currently being used to measure ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder) traits are based on research conducted on male participants, meaning that they are not sensitive to how girls present," said lead researcher Dr Joanna Tsirgiotis, from the College of Education, Psychology and Social Work at Flinders University.

"We need to better understand the unique challenges of girls so that we can improve our diagnostic assessment processes, ensuring they are appropriate for them."

Dr Tsirgiotis shared that the research demonstrated that autistic females may have less obviously unusual intense interests and fewer repetitive behaviours, & are often highly socially motivated and eager for friendships, unlike what is often assumed about children with autism.

In addition, females often had better imaginative and social mimicry skills which may allow them to copy the behaviours of others and, therefore, camouflage their difficulties, resulting in the diagnosis being overlooked.

"This is important because, without a diagnosis, they likely will



not receive the support that they may need," stressed Tsirgiotis.

To investigate specific behaviours in which differences lie, the Flinders researchers analysed profiles of 777 children using two commonly used diagnostic tools measuring ASD traits.

This provided insight into how

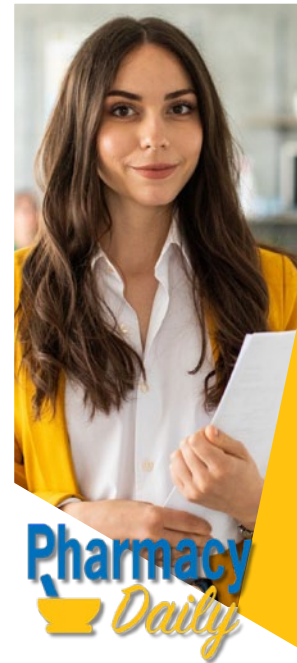
ASD presentations may differ between diagnosed male and female children.

They found that differences between boys and girls identified in this study, both in symptom type and severity, may render the female presentation of ASD less recognisable to referrers, such as parents and teachers, and clinicians tasked with assessment.

"Girls tend to engage in less obviously neurodivergent behaviour and this can add murkiness to the diagnostic picture.

"If we don't have a clear idea of ASD in girls, their characteristics can be misinterpreted as anxiety, quirkiness or even as 'normal' behaviour," explained Tsirgiotis.

"If the female presentation is less recognisable, ASD diagnosis may be delayed or overlooked entirely."



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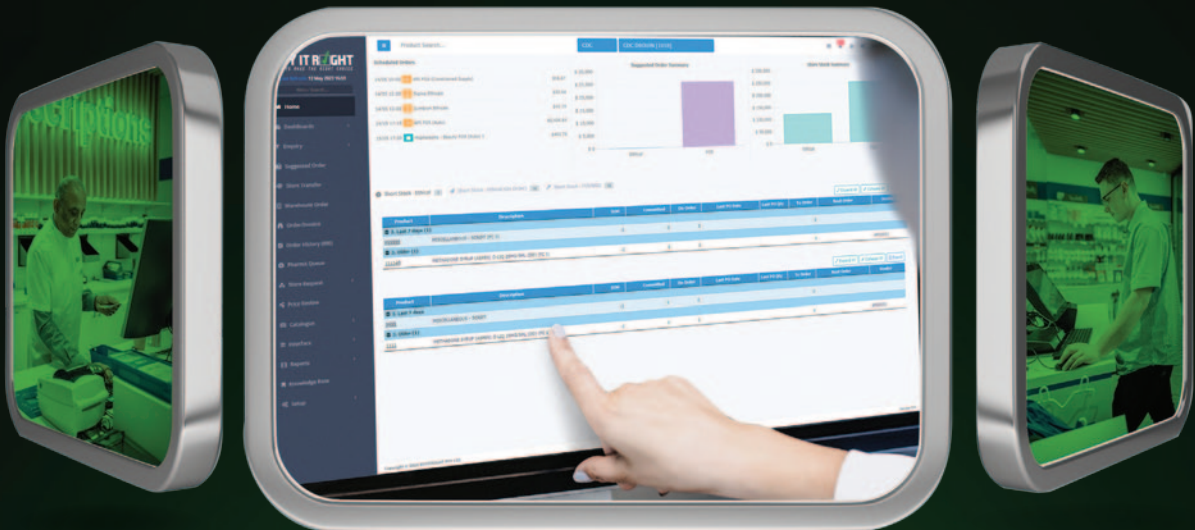
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