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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.



Today's issue of PD

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

Works 2x faster

SFI Health, home of Floridis, recommends Prospan for clinically proven five-action chesty cough relief that helps clear patients' cough twice as fast than left untreated.

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

Free BP checks

BLOOMS is offering free blood pressure checks by a pharmacist as a core health service across its network, to raise awareness around World Hypertension Day (17 May).

Pharmacist-owner Andria Aird said, "women's symptoms are usually dismissed and so take 5 mins to get a BP check".

Keep calm, future is bright urges PPA

THE Professional Pharmacists Australia (PPA) is calling on its members and all pharmacy employees to remain calm, despite the furor around 60-day dispensing, emphasising the "future for pharmacists is brighter than they want you to believe".

PPA President Leon Yap understands employees' concerns with the 60-day dispensing reforms and said he has expressed these concerns directly in meetings with the Federal Health Minister.

Yap stressed it is essential for pharmacy workers to understand that the role of the Pharmacy Guild is to represent employers' interests, while the union's role is to advocate and represent the interests of workers in the sector.

"PPA is receiving disturbing reports from members since the announcement of this policy, ranging from being pressured to participate in political protest action by bosses and having targets set for the number of patients they

can get to sign a petition against the policy, to having their bosses openly telling them their jobs are at risk or having job offers revoked."

"While there may be a cost borne by the owners of community pharmacies due to these reforms, PPA does not believe that pharmacy employees should bear the brunt of any employer decisions."

The PPA has estimated that \$1.3b will be reinvested into community pharmacy, as follows: \$654.9m to fund the remaining years of the 7CPA programs; \$377.3m to make Opioid Treatment Program accessible through the PBS; \$111.8m for electronic-prescription delivery infrastructure and services, including mandating the use of e-prescribing for high-risk and high-cost medicines; \$114.1m for community pharmacies to administer eligible National Immunisation Program vaccines; & \$79.5m to double the Regional Pharmacy Maintenance Allowance to ensure the ongoing viability of

around 1,093 rural and regional pharmacies due to reduced dispensing income.

Yap has questioned whether the impact of the reforms will be as severe as some are predicting saying, "we know that pharmacy workers have been dealing with massive workloads in community pharmacy for years.

"In conjunction with post-pandemic staff shortages, these high attrition rates are further exacerbating the workload issues of pharmacists who have remained on the front lines," explained Yap.

"So it's tough to reconcile this with the pharmacy employers' campaign that they may need to sack up to one-third of the workforce due to the 60-day reforms.

"There may be an overall reduction in dispensing but there is also the move to full scope of practice, the introduction of embedded aged care pharmacists and an increasing role in primary care," Yap concluded.



“ Wizard Pharmacy’s Wizard Rewards Loyalty program adds significant value to our customers, our patients and our business. Our community and business have really benefited from this change. ”

David Tomazin | WIZARD PHARMACY FRANCHISEE
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FRED IT seeks ACCC approval

THE recent award of the national contract for provision of electronic prescription services to FRED IT Group (PD 11 May) has seen the lodgement of a request for authorisation of anti-competitive conduct with the Australian Competition & Consumer Commission (ACCC).

FRED IT says the move is required because it necessitates negotiation with rival provider MediSecure over a range of matters including the date by which certain scripts and data will pass from Medisecure to FRED's eRx platform, how vendors will make the transition, how historical data will be transferred, and when and how Medisecure will cease to be used in respect of publicly funded prescriptions.

Authorisation for the conduct is sought for three years, with the ACCC now inviting the views of interested parties on the application as part of a public consultation process which kicked off this week.

The Commission has released an indicative timetable showing it expects to make a decision regarding interim authorisation next month, and then will consider submissions before making a final determination in Sep this year.

The closing date for feedback on the application is 16 Jun, with more information [HERE](#).

Tassie concerns raised



TASMANIAN pharmacy owners met Labor Senator Anne Urquhart in Ulverstone this week, to explain the impacts of the Govt's move to 60-day dispensing.

Pharmacy Guild of Australia Tasmanian President, Helen O'Byrne said, "our members at the meeting raised genuine concerns.

"We have an owner in Railton who has now put her plans to build a new pharmacy, with space to provide vaccinations, on hold".

"Another member has just purchased a share in a local pharmacy where she has worked for a number of years, based on a valuation that reflects the current profitability, and is now worried that she will not be able to service her debt due to the impacts of this policy," shared O'Byrne.

Confidence in the sector is also

worrying students enrolled into the Bachelor of Pharmacy degree available on the Cradle Coast for the first time, with four students now deciding to take up other options.

O'Byrne said that this is saddening given that after years of advocating for place-based tertiary courses in health, the Pharmacy degree has finally been offered both in Burnie and Launceston.

"The Federal Government did not include pharmacists in any consultations prior to introducing this new policy - giving no consideration to the people on the ground, the pharmacy owners, who truly understand how the current dispensing fees help to cross-subsidise many services which patients currently receive for free, such as deliveries of medicines."

Survey to measure workforce burnout

THE second ANU survey on understanding stress and burnout in community pharmacists is released now, three years after the last one was conducted in 2020.

In the last survey, 50% of community pharmacists reported

experiencing burnout at the time.

Burnout was caused in part by the burden to manage stock shortages and medication supply, & deal with incivility from some patients as significant factors.

Take the survey, [HERE](#).

Ideas calculator

WIZARD Pharmacy has hosted workshops with its franchisees to deliver the group's strategies to reduce the impact of 60-day dispensing.

The workshops involved a state-of-play analysis involving a deep dive into franchisees' current financials to identify areas of improvement and then moved on to identify the 10-step approach recommended.

Wizard Pharmacy Chief Operating Officer Sally Parker emphasised that their franchisees were not alone in navigating these challenges.

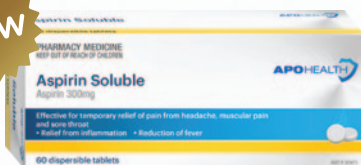
"We have come up with a variety of recommendations that, based on our current calculations, have the potential to not only minimise the potential loss of revenue from 60-day dispensing but increase our revenue.

"Some of the strategies include a new global Eftpos deal, ideas on how to reduce the naked script count from our 24% average and emphasis on meeting our current KPIs, including dead stock <5% and Wizard Rewards sign-ups, which are all supported by the frequent in-store visits from our support services teams," said Parker.

Franchisees were also given access to Wizard Pharmacy's Opportunity Calculator, allowing franchisees to plug in their calculations to see how these recommendations would improve their returns.

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No COVID hearts!

RECEIVING a heart transplant from someone who died with active COVID-19 could put you at a higher risk of death in the months following the procedure, according to international research.

The researchers looked at data from more than 27,000 heart donors, looking for people who tested positive to COVID-19 while they were in hospital leading up to their death, and did not test negative before their death.

The researchers say those who received heart transplants from people who died with active COVID-19 had a 13.8% risk of death six months after the operation and a 23.2% risk of death at a year, compared to 7% and 9.2% respectively, for those whose donors didn't have COVID-19 or had their infection resolve before death.

Learn more [HERE](#).

New Qld Health Minister

QUEENSLAND'S new Health Minister Shannon Fentiman (pictured) was appointed yesterday following a cabinet reshuffle, with industry bodies keen to work closely with her across a range of initiatives.

The Pharmaceutical Society of Australia Queensland President Shane MacDonald sincerely thanked outgoing Minister Yvette D'Ath for her engagement with pharmacists over her term as Health Minister, and added, "there is still work to be done to make sure more vaccines are available to more Queenslanders.

"We want to work with the Government toward a future where all patients can access all vaccines from their local pharmacist, whether in a community pharmacy, general practice, Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation, or aged care facility," MacDonald explained.

The Pharmacy Guild of Australia, Queensland Branch President Chris



Owen thanked D'Ath for remaining "firm in her position of putting patients first and staring down the powerful doctor lobby groups who were constantly and ambitiously attempting to derail and undermine the UTI pilot.

"We are committed to working with Minister Fentiman on a number of important matters including pathways for career progression for pharmacists, pharmacy business ownership rules, and expanding the opportunity for more community pharmacists across the state to practise to their full scope, to ease the burden on GPs and overstretched hospital emergency departments," said Owen.

Genetic variant

A COLOMBIAN man is carrying a genetic variant that appears to have warded off the symptoms of Alzheimer's for 20 years, according to international research.

The team identified the man while studying 1,200 people in the country who carry a gene mutation associated with a rare, hereditary form of Alzheimer's that generally begins to affect cognitive ability at age 40-50.

Despite his brain showing signs that he has had Alzheimer's for a while, the researchers say the man only became cognitively impaired at age 67, and researchers say this man appears to have developed it differently to the only other previous case.

They say studying this man's genetic mutation could teach us more about potential treatments for Alzheimer's down the track - see more [HERE](#).

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Dispensary Corner

WE ALL know it's vital to eat fruit as part of a balanced diet, but a Korean university student perhaps took things a bit far after he ate a banana that was part of a US\$120,000 (A\$180,500) installation by Italian artist Maurizio Cattelan.

Noh Huyn-soo was caught on camera at the Leeum Museum of Art in Seoul as he removed the banana from its duct-taped position on the wall, peeled the fruit and ate it in front of stunned onlookers.

He then returned the banana skin to the wall, taping it back into its original position.

When asked by the museum to explain his actions, he said he was hungry after skipping breakfast, the *Korea Herald* reported.

The student later confessed to local broadcaster *KBS* that he thought "damaging a work of modern art could also be [interpreted as a kind of] artwork", saying the idea of reattaching the banana peel was a new and fun approach.

"I thought it would be interesting...isn't it taped there to be eaten?" he added.

The banana, which forms Cattelan's piece entitled 'Comedian', gets replaced every few days as the fruit spoils.



80-year-old antibiotic gets a relook

AN OLD antibiotic may provide much-needed protection against multi-drug resistant bacterial infections, according to a new study published recently in the journal *PLOS Biology* by James Kirby of Harvard Medical School, US, and colleagues.

The finding may offer a new way to fight difficult-to-treat and potentially lethal infections.

An extract from the study shared that nourseothricin is a natural product made by a soil fungus, which contains multiple forms of a complex molecule called streptothricin.

Its discovery in the 1940s generated high hopes for it as a powerful agent against gram-negative bacteria, which, due to their thick outer protective layer, are especially hard to kill with other antibiotics.

But nourseothricin proved toxic to kidneys, and it was dropped.

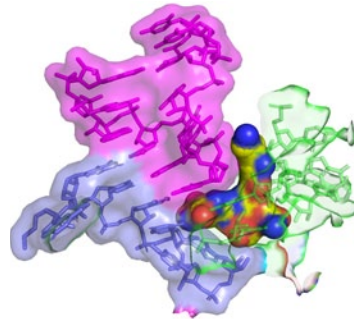
However, the rise of antibiotic-resistant bacterial infections has spurred the search for new antibiotics, leading Kirby and colleagues to take another look at nourseothricin.

Early studies of nourseothricin suffered from incomplete purification of the streptothricins.

The study found that more recent work has shown that the multiple forms have different toxicities with one, streptothricin-F, significantly less toxic while remaining highly active against contemporary multi-drug resistant pathogens.

Here, the authors characterised the antibacterial action, renal toxicity, and mechanism of action of highly purified forms of two different streptothricins, D and F.

The D form was more powerful than the F form against drug-resistant Enterobacterales and



other bacterial species but caused renal toxicity at a lower dose.

Both were highly selective for gram-negative bacteria, the study found.

Using cryo-electron microscopy, the study's authors explained that the streptothricin-F bound extensively to a sub-unit of the bacterial ribosome, accounting for the translation errors these antibiotics are known to induce in

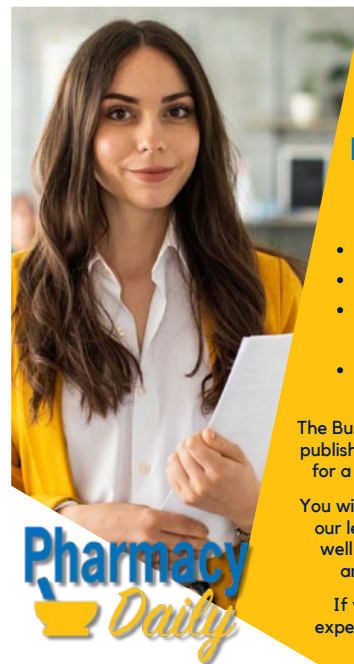
their target bacteria.

The authors added the binding interaction is distinct from other known inhibitors of translation, suggesting it may find use when those agents are not effective.

"Based on unique, promising activity," Kirby said, "we believe the streptothricin scaffold deserves further pre-clinical exploration as a potential therapeutic for the treatment of multi-drug resistant, gram-negative pathogens."

Kirby added, "isolated in 1942, streptothricin was the first antibiotic discovered with potent gram-negative activity."

"We find that not only is its activity potent but that it is highly active to the hardest contemporary multi-drug resistant pathogens and works by a unique mechanism to inhibit protein synthesis."



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