



# PHARMACY CAREERS SUMMIT 2023

FREE Virtual Event | 7th July 2023



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The summit will comprise an extensive series of keynotes and conversations in the Auditorium in conjunction with Exhibition Halls where you will be able to chat one-on-one with many of Australia's leading Pharmacy Employer organisations, Peak Bodies and Universities at their virtual booths.

The opportunities throughout the event for your career are immense and not to be missed, so please join us on 7 July, 2023 between 9.50am – 5.00pm AEST for this **free** event.

Find out more at [pharmacycareerssummit.com.au](https://pharmacycareerssummit.com.au)



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Award winning  
Community Pharmacist



**Heidi Dariz**  
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## Today's issue of PD

*Pharmacy Daily* today features four pages of news, plus a cover wrap from **Pharmacy Careers Summit** and a full page from **Pharmacium**.

## Don't miss this!

**PEAK** pharmacy and industry bodies are coming together for the inaugural **Pharmacy Careers Summit**, presented by Raven's Recruitment.

In an exclusive partnership with *Pharmacy Daily*, the virtual Summit aims to support the career aspirations of new & current pharmacy students and professionals.

There will be an auditorium to hear from key speakers and exhibition halls to chat one on one with many pharmacy employer organisations who are attending.

To register for the event, and learn more, see the **cover page**.

# Wesfarmers looks at InstantScripts

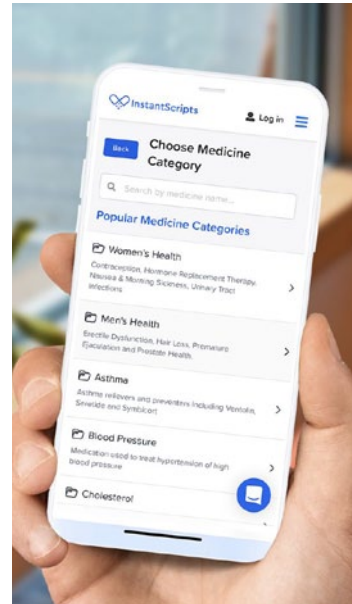
**AUSTRALIAN** Pharmaceutical Industries (API) owner Wesfarmers is looking to further expand its interests in the pharmacy space, with the company in talks to acquire online prescription business InstantScripts, according to the *Australian Financial Review* (AFR).

InstantScripts was founded in 2018, and offers a range of services including telehealth consultations, medical certificates and the ability to request prescriptions for around 300 medicines.

The company's website notes it is a service run by "Australian registered doctors to streamline the provision of routine schedule 4 prescriptions to patients in need".

"Patients are able to access these prescriptions online after completing a short digital consultation...our doctors review this consultation and, if appropriate, a prescription is provided," the site notes.

Online scripts and medical certificates can be requested for



a \$19 fee, while the platform also offers online pathology and specialist referrals for \$20.

Approved prescriptions are sent via QR code to a patient's mobile device and email, and "can be taken

to any pharmacy for dispensing".

Sources cited by the *AFR* said the strategic rationale for Wesfarmers pursuing the deal was to drive traffic to its network of API pharmacies across the country.

InstantScripts began soliciting possible offers back in Oct, and was in "advanced talks" with Wesfarmers as recently as early this month, the report says.

Preliminary financial data revealed as part of the process reported that InstantScripts' annual revenue was around \$50 million, with 250,000 active users across the country and links to 2,500 pharmacies, with a proposed valuation of around \$200 million.

Wesfarmers paid \$764 million for API, including the Priceline Pharmacy brand, last year (*PD* 31 Mar 2022) after a brief battle with Woolworths, while more recently the conglomerate's health division also made a \$169 million indicative offer for ASX-listed SILK Laser Australia (*PD* 20 Apr).

## Impact of diabetes inquiry to start

**THE** broader impacts of diabetes on Australia's health system and economy, and recent advances in the prevention and management of the disease, will be the focus of a new inquiry by the House Health Committee.

The Chair of the Committee, Dr Mike Freelander said, "diabetes impacts 1.3 million Australians, and the Committee will conduct this inquiry to better understand the current situation regarding diabetes in Australia, including

the effectiveness of current Australian Government policies and programs aiming to prevent, diagnose and manage the condition".

"The Inquiry will be broad and will also look at lifestyle factors and the interaction between lifestyle, Type 2 diabetes, and obesity."

Submissions can be lodged by interested individuals and organisations, via electronic format by 31 Aug, **HERE**.

## Call for full scope for women's health

**THE** Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia (SHPA) has supported the recommendations of a Senate inquiry into access to contraception and sexual health care services, echoing the call for health professionals to practice to their full scope, supported by more pharmacists with specialty skills, to improve equitable care for women across the country.

The Senate Community Affairs Reference Committee's report

*Ending the postcode lottery: addressing barriers to sexual, maternity and reproductive healthcare in Australia* also calls for increased PBS coverage for contraceptives and review of sexual and reproductive healthcare training, aligning with SHPA recommendations to the inquiry and testimony provided by Dr Luke Grzeskowiak, a member of SHPA's Women's and Newborn Health Leadership Committee.



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## Deaths recorded

THE Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) has recorded that 17,461 people died from COVID-19 as of 30 Apr.

A further breakdown of the numbers revealed that the underlying cause of death for 13,513 was an acute COVID-19 infection, with the virus being confirmed by PCR or rapid antigen testing.

There were a further 3,480 people who died of other causes (eg: cancer), but COVID-19 contributed to their death, shared the ABS.

Another 176 deaths were due to long-term effects of COVID-19 (eg: post COVID-19 condition, or long COVID).

The ABS stated that 293 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have died from COVID-19 since Aug 2021.

Further, 25 deaths were certified as being due to suspected COVID-19 though not confirmed through testing.

## Guild S8 drugs reminder

THE Pharmacy Guild of Australia has put out a regulatory reminder that when a pharmacist dispenses a prescription for a Schedule 8 medicine, "they must either personally know the patient for whom the prescription is written or be familiar with the prescriber's handwriting".

"If neither of these requirements are met, the pharmacist must confirm the prescription by contacting the prescriber.

"If the pharmacist cannot contact the prescriber to confirm the prescription, the pharmacist may provide the patient with no more than two days' supply of the medicine, pending verification with the prescriber," shared the Guild.

It is also important that pharmacists understand and acknowledge how this supply should be recorded in the Drug Register, explained the Guild.

"The prescription should be dispensed and a quantity sufficient for two days' treatment should be



supplied (appropriately labelled).

"The entry on the Drug Register must accurately reflect what happened.

"The quantity listed as leaving the pharmacy must be the quantity actually supplied at the time," explained the Guild.

"When and if the remaining supply is made, a second entry relating to the prescription must be made on the day of the second supply.

"For electronic prescriptions, it is not necessary for the pharmacist to contact the prescriber to verify the prescription," the Guild concluded.

## Scemblix listed


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

Novartis also welcomes the listing of Scemblix 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 in scientific literature), offering 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 ASCEMBL trial.

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including against symptomatic infection and severe disease when given 6 months after a previous COVID-19 vaccine<sup>2-4</sup>

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▼ This vaccine is subject to additional monitoring in Australia. This will allow quick identification of new safety information. Healthcare professionals are asked to report any suspected adverse events at [www.tga.gov.au/reporting-problems](http://www.tga.gov.au/reporting-problems).

BEFORE PRESCRIBING, PLEASE REVIEW PRODUCT INFORMATION AVAILABLE FROM [HTTPS://MODERNACOV19GLOBAL.COM/EN-AU](https://modernacovid19global.com/en-au) OR FROM MODERNA AUSTRALIA ON 1800 344 018.

**References:** 1. Spikevax Bivalent Original/Omicron BA.4-5 Product Information, February 2023. 2. Chalkias S *et al.* A bivalent Omicron-containing booster vaccine against COVID-19. Available at: <https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2022.06.24.22276703v1>. Accessed April 2023. 3. Andersson NW, *et al.* Comparative effectiveness of the bivalent BA.4-5 and BA.1 mRNA-booster vaccines in the Nordic countries. *medRxiv*. Published online 2023:2023-01. 4. Link-Gelles R *et al.* *MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep* 2022;71:1526-30.

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## Musk's Neuralink promise 'misleading'

**ELON** Musk's brain-chip firm says it has received approval from the US Food and Drug Administration to conduct its first tests on humans.

The Neuralink implant company wants to help restore vision and mobility to people by linking brains to computers.

However, the company stated it does not have immediate plans to start recruiting participants.

Australia's RMIT University, School of Engineering Prof Dinesh Kumar shared, "although Neuralink is creating a step in the right direction for brain-computer interface advancement, it is making promises that are simply misleading.

"In terms of technology, Neuralink has gone further than others," Kumar said.

"The biggest selling point for them is their medical procedure, essentially having a CED scan and robotic surgery built into one.

"It has also developed a very accurate electrode placement system that won't compromise blood flow while injecting 1,000 electrodes into the brain.

"The medical procedure requires extensive surgery with the skull being cut open and the electronic chip being placed inside - but there are several problems with this," Kumar said.

"Firstly, infection, although any surgery has a risk of infection, this is especially worrisome as it is cutting the skull open.

"But the biggest problem is that the brain has a natural tendency to shut down neurons after there is a change in its structure.

"The surgery would cause trauma and change the brain's neurons' behaviours and positions.

"Furthermore, there are a lot of extreme risks such as scarring of the neural tissues or interfering with the sensory and motor pathways," Kumar warned.

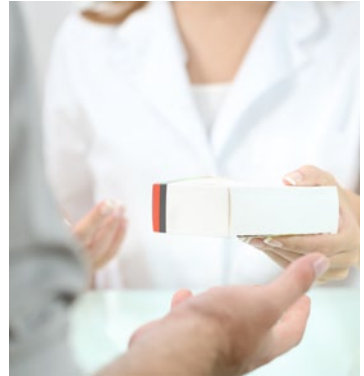
## AZ drugs combo positive

**ASTRAZENECA** announced last week that a combination of its cancer drugs, Imfinzi and Lynparza, when added to platinum-based chemotherapy, showed positive results in a late-stage trial in patients with advanced or recurrent endometrial cancer.

The treatment followed by either Imfinzi plus Lynparza or Imfinzi alone as maintenance therapy showed a statistically meaningful improvement in progression-free survival compared to standard-of-care chemotherapy, the British drugmaker said, as reported by *Reuters*.

Overall survival data was immature at the time of analysis, AstraZeneca said, although a favourable trend was observed for the treatments.

Endometrial cancer is the sixth most common cancer in women globally and the most common in women who have already been through menopause, with the average age at diagnosis being



over 60 years old, according to AstraZeneca.

Imfinzi belongs to the immunotherapy class of treatments that boost the body's own defences to fight cancer by using antibodies that block or bind to foreign substances in the body.

Lynparza, jointly developed with US-based Merck & Co, was approved last year by the US Food and Drug Administration as a treatment for early-stage breast cancer with certain mutations.

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## Dispensary Corner

THE latest retailing financial phenomenon is Buy Now Pay Later (BNPL), but a New Zealand pizza chain is taking things to the extreme by offering customers the opportunity to pay for their pie after they die.

Dubbed "AfterLife Pay", the limited time promotional initiative by the appropriately named Hell Pizza is on offer to 666 customers who register at [afterlife.hellpizza.nz](https://afterlife.hellpizza.nz) in the next few weeks.

"Those chosen will be invited to sign a real amendment to their wills, allowing the cost of their pizza to be collected upon death," the company said.

"No interest or fees will apply, and the agreement is legally binding," according to the Hell Pizza website, which is now taking orders for the pay-delayed pizzas in return for a legally binding signed codicil.

The pizzeria's owners said they were making the offer as a tongue-in-cheek reaction to the proliferation of BNPL in the current tight economic environment.

"We're seeing a growing number of people using the schemes to buy essential items like food, and we think it's taking it a step too far when you've got quick service restaurants like ours being asked to offer BNPL for what is considered a treat - especially when you consider people are falling behind in their payments and 10.5% of loans in NZ are in arrears," said Hell Pizza CEO Ben Cumming.

## 'One-stop shop' clinic

PEOPLE with a complex developmental disability will receive greater support for their overall health at Sydney's Westmead Hospital following a successful trial of a new clinic that provides free and comprehensive health checks.

NSW Minister for Health Ryan Park said the new clinic has been granted \$50,000 a year by Western Sydney Local Health District (WSLHD) to continue to provide access to up to nine different specialty health checks for patients.

The health checks include blood work, dental checks, scans, eye tests, ear checks and urine and bowel assessments, shared Park.

"All treatments are specifically tailored to the needs of people with a complex developmental disability and one-stop shop model, making access to healthcare easier," the minister explained.

Established in 2020, the "one-stop shop" clinic was set up in response to the rising number of people with a disability presenting to WSLHD emergency departments with preventable conditions.

The clinic is currently supporting



patients with developmental intellectual and physical disabilities such as cerebral palsy.

Minister for Disability Inclusion Kate Washington added, "making basic health services more accessible to people with disability is a life-saving initiative".

"We are backing the 'one-stop shop' into the future because it works - ensuring better health and wellbeing of people with complex disabilities."

Donna Davis, Member for Parramatta, said, "prevention is better than a cure so investment in easily accessible health checks for people with complex needs is a practical and common sense approach".

## Mental Health Prize nominations open

NOMINATIONS are now open for the prestigious Australian Mental Health Prize 2023.

The prize, established by the UNSW Sydney's Discipline of Psychiatry and Mental Health, shines a light on the mental health challenges in communities and the importance of continued support.

"The state of mental health in Australia is concerning, with notable increases in depression, anxiety, and suicide rates,

especially among young people," said Prof Allan Fels, co-chair of the Australian Mental Health Prize Advisory Committee and previous recipient of the prize.

"By recognising those who are making a difference in this space, we can raise awareness of the issue and inspire others to take action," added Prof Henry Brodaty, who helped establish the prize.

Nominate **HERE** - the closing date is 17 Jul with the winner announced in late Sep.

## Guild Update

### Impact of 60-day dispensing

A LOT of attention has been focused recently on the introduction of 60-day dispensing and its impact on patients and the health system.

A survey of more than 1,500 community pharmacists conducted by the Pharmacy Guild to find out what 60-day dispensing means for their patients has underscored just how everyone is going to suffer from it.

Of the respondents to the survey, 83 per cent of pharmacists said they would be forced to stop opening extended hours, and 89 per cent said they'd stop offering blood pressure testing free of charge.

Some 84 per cent said they'd have no option but to stop complimentary deliveries of medicines to aged care facilities.

What the survey shows is that the negative impacts will be felt by everyone in all communities across Australia.

This is why the Guild and community pharmacies are opposed to this move.

Cheaper medicines can be made available by simply lowering the PBS general co-payment to \$19, which is a solution that has benefits for everyone, rather than seeing everyone suffer.



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