



Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features three pages of news.

Heart benefits?

NOVO Nordisk said the heart-protective benefits of its Wegovy (semaglutide) obesity drug are due to more than weight loss alone, according to new data, *Reuters* has reported.

Full results from the study, presented at the American Heart Association annual scientific meeting in Philadelphia in front of a standing-room-only crowd and published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, suggest the drug has other beneficial effects beyond the known health benefits from losing weight.

The heart risk difference between patients who received Wegovy and those on placebo "began to appear almost immediately after starting treatment," researchers said.

MedAdvisor wins contract

MEDADVISOR Solutions has won a contract to develop and deliver enhancements to its PlusOne software platform to support the 2024-2025 North Queensland Community Pharmacy Scope of Practice Pilot.

The pilot program will allow prescribing pharmacists to diagnose and treat up to 23 everyday health conditions across acute care, chronic conditions, and medication management.

The program will be delivered via an enhanced MedAdvisor PlusOne software platform, which will consist of a patient portal, clinical information system, prescribing functionality, secure communications, and data analytics, the company stated.

The cost of delivering the program will be partially funded by the Pharmacy Guild of Australia.

According to MedAdvisor CEO Rick Ratliff, the awarding of this contract is a "testament to the company's enduring reputation

among its 5,700+ pharmacy customers around the nation".

Ratliff also noted that the company expects to generate new revenue streams in the future from assisting in the delivery of these expanded services.

National President of the Pharmacy Guild of Australia, Trent Twomey, said, "with timely primary care becoming less accessible for patients in addressing their healthcare needs across Australia, we anticipate that community pharmacies can play a key role in bridging this gap".

The pilot program is expected to launch on 01 Feb 2024, and operate for a period of 16 months, concluding on 31 May 2025.

Currently, approximately 135 community pharmacies in North Qld have registered to participate in the program.

Prescribing pharmacists will be able to offer up to 23 diverse clinical services to their local communities. *JG*

National apology

ON WED 29 Nov, the Australian Govt will issue a national formal apology to all Australians impacted by the Thalidomide tragedy.

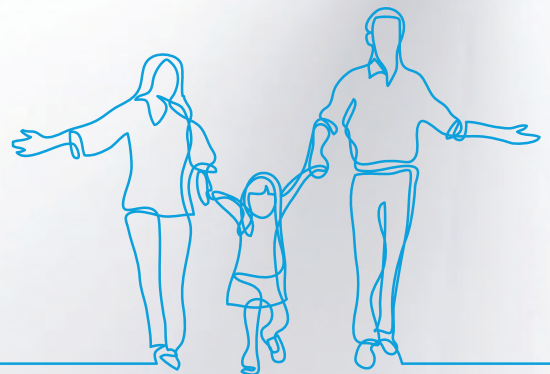
Prime Minister Anthony Albanese will deliver the apology on behalf of the Govt.

"The Thalidomide tragedy is a dark chapter in the history of our nation and the world.

"This moment is a long overdue national acknowledgement, and in giving this apology, we will acknowledge all those babies who died and the families who mourn them, as well as those who survived but whose lives were made so much harder by the effects of this terrible drug," Albanese remarked.

Federal Health Minister Mark Butler said, "so many were let down by systemic failures, and it's a sobering reminder of our duty to put in place measures to protect people from harm".

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Time for a pulse check

THE Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) has launched an end-of-year survey this week to check the pulse of its members, following a turbulent year for pharmacists.



In an email to members, PSA General Manager Membership Jen Steer said significant changes

to the industry, such as 60-Day Dispensing and expanding the scope of practice, meant it was a critical time to check in on all the members and their needs.

“When there is significant change in the profession, it’s vital PSA stay on top of changing priorities to ensure that members get what they need and want most,” Steer said.

“As we plan for next year and beyond, we are keen to ensure our work is informed by those who stand at the heart of PSA - our members,” she added.

“That’s how we can deliver the

maximum value for members today while shaping the pharmacy profession of tomorrow.

“Ensuring PSA is delivering benefits for members at every stage of their career, whether they are a recent graduate, an established pharmacist, or nearing retirement, is critical.

“This is an opportunity for members to provide their thoughts and maintain the focus on what they need the most.”

Members and non-members can have their say on the PSA Member Pulse Survey [HERE](#). JG

Leveraging pastilles and vapes for growth

ECS Botanics is launching a range of GMP-certified cannabidiol (CBD) and tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) pastilles and vapes.

The products are expected to be in the market before the end of this year and will increase ECS Botanics’ white-label offering to four products - flowers, oils, pastilles and vapes.

Managing Director Nan-Maree Schoerie said, “the expansion of our B2B product range to include GMP-certified CBD and THC pastilles and THC vapes provides our customers and their patients with alternative dosage methods.

“Pastilles and vapes are relatively new delivery methods and will complement our existing B2B offering, leveraging our expertise to meet growing consumer demand for premium medicinal cannabis solutions.

“We have already received pre-orders for these new products and expect demand to increase

rapidly,” Schoerie commented.

The pastilles will be available in both CBD and THC forms, as well as combinations of both.

They are sugar-free, plant-based, and offered in a range of flavours and colours.

Pastilles are chewed and dissolved in the mouth, enabling the active ingredients to rapidly enter the bloodstream.

The THC distillate vape will be infused with additional terpenes, replacing the previous dried flower vaporiser cartridge product that ECS was looking to introduce to the market in 2023.

The cartridges will be available in 0.5ml and 1ml strengths.

Australian-made, the vape cartridges use oil concentrates manufactured from ECS’ pharmaceutical-grade extracts derived from the company’s Australian-grown flower, and come in child-resistant packaging, the company statement explained.

Time to rethink your dispensary set-up?

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Dispensary Corner



A TAIWANESE couple decked out in a tux and gown embrace in front of a mountain of trash in an unorthodox wedding photo - one the environment-conscious bride hopes will discourage her guests from generating unnecessary garbage.

Greenpeace campaigner Iris Hsueh and her fiancé are having their "environmentally friendly wedding" in Jan, and have asked guests to bring their own containers for taking home leftovers from the event.

Deciding that showing - not telling - was a more effective communication method, the Taipei-based couple travelled three hours south for a photo shoot in Nantou County's Puli township, where the amount of trash brought to a local dump has steadily risen over the years.

"If any guests are not willing to bring along a container, I would show them the photograph and say, 'would you reconsider?'" the 33-year-old told AFP, adding that the photos ended up drawing local media attention.

"I didn't think it would create such a big sensation."

Since their photos went viral, Hsueh said her friends and relatives had promised to rethink how much waste they create in their daily lives.



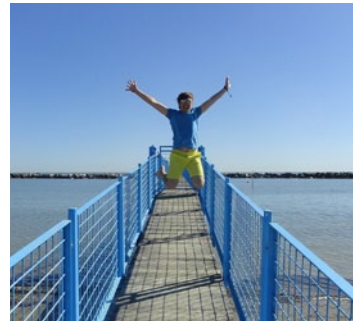
Fostering motivation works

PHARMACISTS are trusted and accessible healthcare professionals who are accustomed to delivering brief health behaviour change with technique-based interventions for chronic health conditions.

However, little is known about the factors influencing pharmacists' use of behaviour change techniques and their capacity to deliver these interventions within community pharmacies in Australia.

A Curtin University study, led by Dr Chloe Maxwell-Smith from the Curtin School of Population Health, employed the COM-B model to explore the factors that explain pharmacists' delivery of behaviour change techniques in practice.

A secondary objective was to ascertain whether capability, opportunity, and motivation are associated with and explain significant variance in using behaviour change techniques



during patient interactions.

"The study found pharmacist motivation was the most important construct explaining behaviour change technique use," Smith said.

"Interventions should seek to foster pharmacist motivation and may benefit from adopting COM-B as a behaviour change framework, to understand the factors influencing the delivery of behaviour change interventions."

To learn more [CLICK HERE](#). JG

New Chair of Heart Foundation Vic Board

THE National Heart Foundation of Australia has appointed Prof Dion Stub as the Chair of its Victorian Advisory Board.

Interventional cardiologist and co-Director of the Centre Cardiovascular Research and Education in Therapeutics Monash University, Stub will replace Dr Angela Jackson, who is stepping down from the role of Chair but is continuing on as an Advisory Board member.

Heart Foundation Victorian General Manager Chris Enright said Stub's appointment was in keeping with the peak organisation's focus on maintaining high-level expertise to provide advice and guidance.

"Dion is a highly-credentialed

medical expert who has great leadership qualities.

"His inclusive style means he works well with those around him and will effectively lead the highly regarded membership of the Advisory Board," Enright said.

"He embraces the Heart Foundation's vision for better heart health for all Australians, regardless of their postcodes.

Heart Foundation CEO David Lloyd said the appointment of Prof Stub as Chair of the Victorian Advisory Board would help the national organisation grow stronger.

"We are all very much looking forward to working with Dion to continue our important work for communities across Victoria." JG

Guild Update

New Guild sponsorship deal for NAPSA

THE Pharmacy Guild has signed a new three-year sponsorship deal with the National Australian Pharmacy Students' Association (NAPSA).

The deal, which comes into effect today, builds on last year's 12-month agreement.

Pharmacy Guild President and former NAPSA President Trent Twomey said the agreement is a sign of the close relationship between the Guild and NAPSA.

"This three-year sponsorship is an investment in today's pharmacy students who will become tomorrow's pharmacists," Twomey said.

"As a former NAPSA leader myself, I know too well its importance and how invaluable the support from the Guild is to the Association.

"The work the Guild is doing to enable pharmacists to work to their full scope of practice presents students with exciting opportunities and shows how much the profession has changed since I was a student 30 years ago," Twomey explained.

NAPSA President Bano T. Serhan added that the sponsorship arrangement is good for the Guild and good for the Association.

"NAPSA is proud to continue the long-standing relationship we have with the Pharmacy Guild of Australia, as we look forward to expanding opportunities for students in the community pharmacy sector," she concluded.