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Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features two pages of news, plus a full page from TerryWhite Chemmart.

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INTERN PROGRAM

Applications now open

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Co-pay cut the real saving

AUSTRALIANS are on track to save a quarter of a billion dollars on their medicines in 2023, analysis by the Federal Govt has revealed.

The cost of prescription medicines was lowered to \$30 in Jan from \$42.50 in the largest cut to the co-payment in the 75-year history of the PBS (PD 23 Nov 2022).

This has put around \$20m each month back in savings on around 1.8 million cheaper prescriptions.

According to the Govt, more than 600,000 scripts have been issued since 60-day scripts became available, saving patients an estimated \$5m, and by year's end, Australians will have saved more than \$250m on the price of their medicines, with even greater savings to follow in 2024.

The Federal Govt revealed that savings by the state due to lowering the PBS co-payment from Jan to Oct were noted as ACT saved \$5m on 450,000 cheaper scripts; NSW \$63m on 5.6 million scripts; and NT \$1.3m on 112,000 scripts.

While in Qld \$39m was saved on 3.5 million scripts, SA \$13m on 1.1 million scripts; and Tas \$4.2m on 370,000 cheaper scripts.

In Vic \$52m was saved on 4.7 million scripts and in WA \$23m



from 2.1 million scripts.

However, the Guild stated new figures released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics show Australians are still going without prescription medication because of costs, reinforcing the need to reduce the maximum general co-payment for PBS-listed medicines to \$19 (PD 22 Nov).

With the medicine co-pay set to rise from \$30 to \$31.60 for general patients, and the concessional co-payment to rise from \$7.30 to \$7.70, Guild National President Trent Twomey said, "community pharmacy won't rest until the general patient co-pay is \$19, and it's time for the Govt to act now." JG

Batty heads CPS

THE newly elected President of the Council of Pharmacy Schools (CPS) is Prof Kevin Batty of Curtin University.

Batty has a 40-year career in pharmacy, including 10 years as a hospital pharmacist and 25 years as an academic.

He is a Fellow of the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia and was awarded its Western Australia Lifetime Achievement Award this year.



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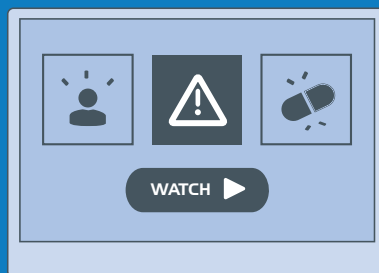
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On promotion: 1 August - 30 November 2023. Available via PDE and Turnover.



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Dispensary Corner

BUSINESSES including pharmacies in Lower Hutt, a city in the Wellington Region of New Zealand, are calling for a permanent solution to a "situation" that has left daytime workers gasping and gagging, official complaints showed.

The Seaview Wastewater Treatment Plant has received 75 complaints about its offensive odour since 2021, according to reports.

Jaysen Eveleigh of Auto Despatch said the stench had become a health and safety issue for all.

"It smells like a portaloos after a three-day festival.

"I have staff who won't eat lunch in our building."

Eveleigh added that builders he hired to construct a fence, complained of headaches and had to leave.

He said he had made numerous complaints to the council after which the treatment plant seemed to disperse a "perfume" in the air, but it hadn't helped.

Veolia Process and Technical Specialist Derek Falvey told *Stuff* he couldn't be sure the odours that locals were complaining about were coming from the plant.

He said there were other treatment facilities nearby.

He remarked Veolia had been operating an "odour blaster", a huge fan that blows a chemical mix to minimise smells, that is going "full noise".

"What we have is an odour like Rotorua and the blaster mitigates that."

MDR invests in Charac UK

MEDADVISOR Solutions (MDR) has announced a strategic investment and collaboration agreement with Charac Limited UK, an omnichannel solution that helps pharmacy businesses streamline their operations into a unified, cloud-native platform that integrates into the National Health Service.

The agreement includes a £1m (A\$1.9m) investment in Charac over a nine-month period which will result in MedAdvisor gaining up to a 7.4% strategic share holding.

In addition, the investment will also result in MedAdvisor closing its UK operations as it transitions customers to the Charac platform, with the company suggesting an annualised saving of up to \$800,000 as a result, but it will also incur one-time costs of \$300,000.

Charac has agreements with around 450 pharmacies in the UK, and according to a release from MedAdvisor, expects an additional 500 in the near future.

Previous financial support for Charac has come from the likes of Royal Mail and the National Pharmacy Association.

Rick Ratliff, CEO of MedAdvisor Solutions said, "both companies share a common focus on pharmacy-enabled patient engagement and are dedicated to supporting pharmacies as their role in the healthcare delivery system evolves".

"This strategic move reinforces our commitment to the UK market and aligns with our vision of creating a global impact in pharmacy-enabled patient engagement."

Meanwhile, MedAdvisor has advised that its H1 FY24 group operating revenue is expected to increase by 10-15% on the previous corresponding period (pcp) thanks to growth across the Australian and US market.

The momentum is largely due to the US business with Q1 momentum expected to continue into Q2, providing projected revenue exceeding expectation by around 90%.

The Australian side of the business is also expected to deliver positive results with an increase of over 15% on the pcp, thanks in part to the Guildlink integration. *DF*

PPA scholarships are open for 2024

THE Pharmacy Programs Administrator (PPA) has announced that students from rural and remote locations or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background who are studying pharmacy or intending to study pharmacy in 2024 can now apply for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Pharmacy Scholarship Scheme (ATSIPSS) and Rural Pharmacy Scholarship Scheme (RPSS).

Applications for the scholarships are now open and initial rounds will close on 31 Jan

next year, PPA has reminded.

Funding for RPSS is only confirmed for one year with a value of up to \$10,000, while for ATSIPSS at least three scholarships are on offer with funding confirmed for one year, with a value of up to \$15,000.

Interested parties can apply via the PPA registration and claiming portal [HERE](#).

If you have any questions regarding the scholarship application process, contact the support centre on 1800 951 285 or email [HERE](#).



Guild Update

Time's up for feedback on Standard

THE feedback process on the Pharmacy Guild's revised Australian Standard for Community Pharmacy Practice has now closed.

The Pharmacy Guild of Australia would like to thank all those who participated.

The Australian Standard (AS) 85000 is the standard which community pharmacies are assessed against to gain quality accreditation in Australia, for example under the Quality Care Pharmacy Program.

The feedback period followed 18 months of consultation and consensus with all key stakeholders who were invited to participate, which led to the new draft.

The Guild first published AS 85000 back in 2011 and subsequently reviewed it in 2017, so now is a great opportunity to shape the standard for the coming years.

As an accredited Standards Development Organisation under Standards Australia, the Pharmacy Guild is the custodian of Australian Standard (AS) 85000.

Now that the Guild has all the feedback and consultations completed, the revised Standard will be launched in the new year.

Here are some of the things we unwrapped in 2023

40+

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