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Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features three pages of news, plus full pages from:

- E45
- NSC Group

New PBS listings

PEOPLE with cervical cancer, urothelial cancer, and spinal muscular atrophy will now have access to new or expanded treatment options through the PBS.

Keytruda (pembrolizumab) is now listed to treat patients with persistent, recurrent, or metastatic cervical cancer.

About 270 women each year will benefit from this listing, and without the subsidy, they might pay around \$137,000 per course of treatment.

Padcev (enfortumab) will be listed for the first time to treat patients with locally advanced or metastatic urothelial cancer whose disease has progressed even after therapy.

About 490 Australians will benefit from this listing which otherwise would see them pay \$53,000 for a treatment course.

Evrysdi (risdiplam) will be expanded on the PBS to treat more patients with spinal muscular atrophy, including adult patients who had symptoms before they turned 19 years and had no prior treatment, as well as for children and infants genetically diagnosed with the most severe types of spinal muscular atrophy before symptom onset.

About 130 infants, children, and adults will benefit from this listing, which instead could cost over \$300,000 per year of treatment.

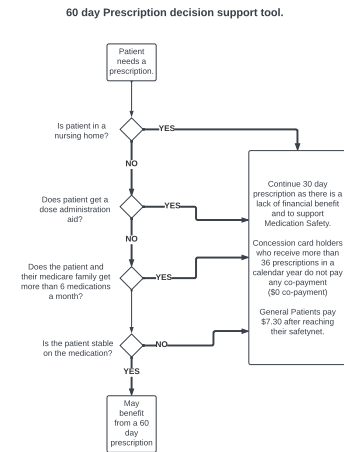
60DD letter to doctors

THE Community and Pharmacy Support Group (CAPS) has written to general practitioners, asking them to be "mindful" when prescribing 60-day prescriptions "unless it is in the patient's financial best interests and meets the clinical guidelines to do so".

CAPS, which has been actively engaging with stakeholders across the pharmacy sector in relation to 60DD (PD 12 Sep), noted that most non-concessional patient co-payments are lower than the \$30 co-payment "so a 60DD prescription will just mean that the patient pays double, meaning that there is no saving".

The mass mailout also asks GPs to consider not prescribing 60DD items to safety net patients, or those that will reach the safety net, because again it will be of no financial benefit to them.

The letter poses key questions suggesting that prescribing stable medicines via 60DD may "give the Government further impetus to allow pharmacists to prescribe these medicines" and also raises the possibility that 60DD may also



allow the Health Department to ultimately reduce the billing fee associated with GP care plans.

"We ask that you as a prescriber speak to your local pharmacist before you make the decision to prescribe 60DD for your patients, to ensure it is in the best interest of the patients now and into the future," the CAPS letter concludes.

The document also includes a 60-day prescription "decision support tool" (pictured) which outlines the "losers" from the initiative. BP

Continence scheme applications open

PATIENTS can now apply for the Continence Aids Payment Scheme online, helping them to defray some of the costs of purchasing continence products.

The program applies to people with permanent and severe incontinence, with registered health professionals such as GPs, registered nurses or physiotherapists required to complete a section of the form with information about the condition which is lodged along with the submission.

Applications are made via Medicare online accounts, with health professionals encouraged to help raise awareness of the program and encourage relevant patients to apply.

Patients with non-neurological conditions must also have a Pensioner Concession Card in order to apply.

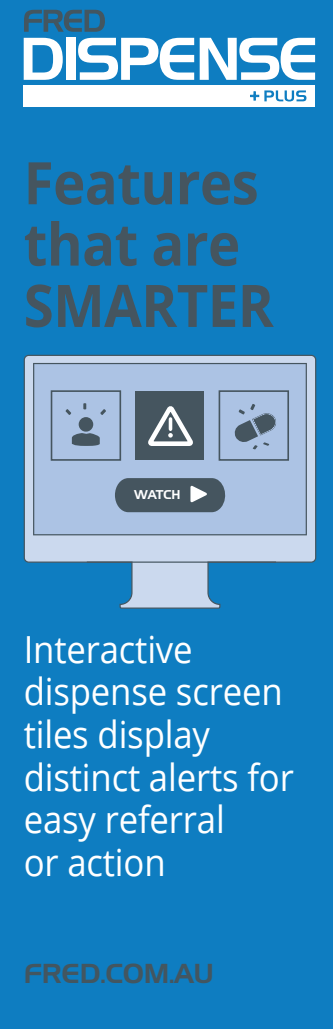
The Continence Aids Payment Scheme provides for a yearly non-taxable payment of up to \$676.50 per person - for details see servicesaustralia.gov.au.

E45 itch recovery

E45'S new cooling foam for face and body can provide immediate, soothing relief for irritated skin in as little as 60 seconds - see page four.

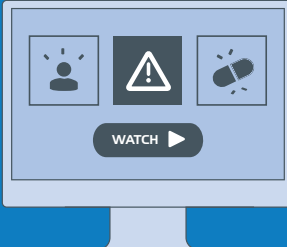
Managers wanted

NSC Group is recruiting for five pharmacy managers in Brisbane, Adelaide and Shoal Bay, NSW - details on page five.



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Pain relief in hand

RELIEF could be on the way for people with painful hand osteoarthritis (OA), after a Monash University and Alfred Health-led study found that methotrexate can reduce symptoms of the condition.

Senior author Prof Flavia Cicuttini said the study identified the role of inflammation in hand OA and the potential benefit of targeting patients who experience painful symptoms.

"In our study, pain stayed the same in the placebo group but continued to decrease in the methotrexate group at three and six months... the pain improvement in the methotrexate group was twice as much as in the placebo group," Cicuttini said.

"Based on these results, use of methotrexate can be considered in the management of hand OA," she concluded.

Methotrexate is commonly used in neoplastic diseases.

PSA to help identify individual scope

THE Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) last week officially launched the Professional Practice Standards Quality Improvement and Self-Assessment Implementation Program to help community pharmacists better understand and implement the standards into their practice.

The Implementation Program enables pharmacists to identify their individual scope of practice and the standards relevant to them, as well as self-assess against these guidelines.

Upon completing the program, pharmacists are provided with a tailored action plan to help them improve their practice.

Speaking at the Western Australia Annual Therapeutic Update in Perth, PSA National President Dr Fei Sim (**pictured**) strongly encouraged pharmacists to take advantage of the Quality Improvement and Implementation Program to improve their practice.

"When we launched the new Professional Practice Standards



earlier this year, we knew that it would fundamentally change the way pharmacists interact with and apply professional standards to their own practice," Sim said.

"Our Implementation Program allows each pharmacist to take an individual approach to applying the Standards in practice, no matter what our area of specialisation.

"Self-assessing performance against these standards allows all of us to better our practice, and in delivering better care.

Sim added as pharmacists' scope of practice continues to evolve, "it is vital we continually assess our own performance as to whether

we consistently enable the delivery of safe, high-quality, reliable, and effective healthcare services".

"I encourage all pharmacists, in all areas of practice and in all career stages to make the most of the Professional Practice Standards Quality Improvement and Self-Assessment Implementation Program as a contemporary, evidence-based resource to guide their quality professional practice."

By incorporating these standards into daily practice, pharmacists will ensure safe, effective and person-centred care for all, she explained.

The launch of this interactive program reaffirms the Society's "dedication to supporting pharmacists to provide quality healthcare services; and remains committed to equipping them with the knowledge and tools they need to excel in their roles and improve patient outcomes," PSA stated.

To learn more about the Professional Practice Standards, the implementation program, and more, **CLICK HERE.** JG

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FIP hails common ailments schemes

COMMUNITY pharmacists can and do provide "early and meaningful interventions in a range of common conditions", according to a new report from the International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP).

The accessibility of pharmacies to patients is a key factor, with the report compiling data from 24 countries and providing several case studies giving examples of such interventions.

Sarah Dineen-Griffin, VP of the FIP Community Pharmacy Section, said the *Pharmacist-led common ailments schemes: A global intelligence* (**CLICK**

HERE) would be "invaluable to inform the future international development of common ailment schemes through exchanging evidence and experiences from individual countries".

A video summarising the report is at pharmacydaily.com.au/videos.

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Dispensary Corner

FORGET cyber attacks and online ransom demands - a major outage at a medical facility in the USA has been blamed on a cat.

American political news site *The Register* has reported on the case of a four-hour system interruption at the Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Kansas City, Missouri, which has been attributed to a feline jumping onto a technician's keyboard at just the wrong moment.

The case came to light after a regular review of IT issues within US Government departments, during which one of the participants described the recent incident when a systems administrator was busily "reviewing the configuration of a server cluster".

The cat reportedly jumped onto the keyboard and hit the delete key, causing the major system shutdown which took some time to rectify.

It's understood that during the IT review another participant commented "this is why I have a dog, not a cat" prompting plenty of laughter from the other participants.

The Department of Veterans Affairs wasn't able to confirm the involvement of the mischievous feline, but did admit to an "inadvertent deletion of server profiles".

"The issue was quickly identified and the system restored within four hours, and there have been no further issues or direct impacts to veterans from this incident," the official statement noted.

EZZ expands reach to CW

ASX-LISTED genomics company EZZ Life Science Holdings has launched 10 of its most popular products into the Chemist Warehouse online marketplace.

This new opportunity further expands EZZ's omnichannel distribution strategy, which is said to complement its recent launches on eBay, Amazon Australia, and across 700 pharmacies.

The marketplace will stock a selection of both EZZ-branded and Eaoron-branded products.

Glenn Cross, Chairman of EZZ Life Science said, "we are delighted to establish this new distribution channel with Chemist Warehouse, bringing our products to more consumers across Australia".

Launched last year, Chemist Warehouse's in-house developed online marketplace provides customers with access to an even larger portfolio of products and, in turn, will allow EZZ's quality skincare and health supplement range to reach a wider audience, Cross (**pictured**) explained.

EZZ's initial selection of key



products to be distributed through the site includes L-Lysine Growth Capsules, Bone Growth Chews, Children's Eye Health, Luminescent Beauty, Magnesium Plus, Liver Tonic, Men's Performance, Sugar Metabolism, Joint Energy Boost Tablets, and Brain Focus Superblend, with plans to introduce more in the months ahead. *JG*

Rite Aid files for Chapter 11 protection

RITE Aid, one of the largest pharmacy chains in the United States, filed for bankruptcy on Sun, weighed down by billions of dollars in debt, declining sales and more than 1,000 federal, state and local lawsuits claiming the group filled thousands of "illegal prescriptions for opioid painkillers", *NYT* has reported.

The pharmacy company filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection in New Jersey.

Rite Aid's stock has fallen nearly 80% since the start of the year.

That array of problems has created "just kind of the

perfect storm," said Sarah Foss, the global head of legal and restructuring at the financial services company Debtwire.

"I think Chapter 11 is really the only option for somebody like Rite Aid to get all of this settled.

"On a basic level, what bankruptcy does is it allows you to settle it all in one forum."

Rite Aid has closed several stores in recent months and has been preparing to close hundreds more.

As of Jun, according to company filings, it had \$3.3b in debt, plus pending opioid litigation.

Guild Update

How cyber wise are you?

OCT is Cyber Security Awareness month, and the Guild has helpful tips on how to maximise your cyber security.

Here are five simple steps to help you be more cyber secure:

1. Create strong passwords by making them long, complex, and unique. Never re-use passwords, as this means that one breached account can lead to multiple breaches.
2. If you follow step one, remembering passwords can be difficult. A password manager will add that extra layer of protection while allowing you to easily manage hundreds of unique passwords at once.
3. Multi-factor authentication is basically a password for your password. If your password has been breached, multi-factor authentication prevents immediate access to your account.
4. Keeping your pharmacy software updated is a simple way to keep security holes patched that can otherwise be breached by hackers.
5. Know how to recognise phishing attempts before it's too late. Always take a moment to think about whether something doesn't seem quite right. Avoid clicking on suspicious links, downloading attachments, or providing personal information.

Pharmacy Guild members can find out more at the Guild website, **HERE**.



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