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## Today's issue of PD

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

- TerryWhite Chemmart
- NSC Group

## PBS migraine med

AUSTRALIANS with treatment-resistant high-frequency episodic migraine will have access to Ajovy (fremanezumab) through the PBS from 01 Nov.

ANZ Headache Society's President Dr Elspeth Hutton said, "this new listing for high-frequency episodic migraine is welcome as it will extend that chance for a better life to more Australians, as these patients have a greater risk of progressing to chronic migraine, and are also likely to have a higher risk of developing comorbidities".

## FIP urges transformation

THE International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) has issued a document calling on its 156 national member organisations, individual members and global pharmacy agencies to take action to accelerate pharmaceutical workforce transformation.

The *FIP Brisbane Calls to Action* document describes 10 actions, which include advocating enhanced training pathways for professional recognition and developing adaptable systems, tools and mechanisms including competency development frameworks, that will support the evolution of a range of progressive roles for pharmacists.

These actions were developed with the consensus of over 120 delegates from more than 40 countries attending a workforce symposium 'Accelerating towards 2030: Workforce transformation for better health', hosted by the FIP Global Pharmaceutical Observatory



(GPO) and the FIP Hub in Brisbane, Australia, last month (PD 26 Sep).

CEO Dr Catherine Duggan said, "this symposium represented a mid-term point between FIP's Global Conference on Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences Education in 2016 - at which a global vision for the pharmaceutical workforce was created - and the World Health Organization Global Strategy on Human Resources for Health 2030 ambitions.

"This has marked a significant opportunity to review our pharmacy workforce transformation objectives, and our *Brisbane Calls to Action* were developed, driven by expert insights and current evidence from FIP GPO and Hub." JG

## Viral pharma

THE latest Raven's Recruitment *Your Pharmacy Career Podcast*, HERE, features Jamil Karaki, also known as the Megamind Pharmacist with over 62k followers on TikTok.

Karaki has managed large pharmacies and led teams of up to 47 staff members, all by the age of 27.

He also started sharing his knowledge through "Megamind sessions," where he informed his colleagues and pharmacy students about common ailments and their treatments.

The podcast, available on all the usual platforms, shows the importance of embracing social media as a tool for pharmacists to share their knowledge and engage with the community.

"Key to a larger reach is always having the same level of confidence and certainty when giving advice to whoever it may be," Karaki said.

## Frustrations lead to "Pharmageddon" in US

SIGNS are brewing that US pharmacists are planning larger strikes, with more walkouts targeting large chains like Walgreens, CVS and Rite Aid in early Nov, reported *NBC News*.

The pharmacists don't have a union, so there is no way to tell how many people might participate or how many locations could be affected.

What's unusual is that the strikers aren't asking their employers for better pay.

They're asking them to hire

more staff so their workloads are less overwhelming.

They are also seeking better working conditions.

"It's really about having support to do the job safely," said Bled Tanoë, an Oklahoma City pharmacist and spokesperson for the frustrated pharmacists, who created #PizzasNotWorking in 2021 to criticise the chains' response to staff complaints.

More recently she's been calling the potential walkouts "Pharmageddon".

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## Qld expands vax scope

**THE** vaccination scope has been expanded in Qld yesterday, with the new Extended Practice Authority (EPA) to allow pharmacists to vaccinate Queenslanders aged two years and older.

It also authorises pharmacists to deliver vaccinations in more settings, including general practices, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander health services, and aged care facilities.

Pharmacists will now be able to deliver a wider range of vaccines including hepatitis B, varicella (chickenpox), meningococcal B, human papillomavirus, typhoid fever, herpes zoster, and Japanese encephalitis.

PSA Qld President Shane MacDonald welcomed the move by the Qld Govt.

“PSA has strongly advocated for pharmacists across all health settings to be able to deliver more vaccines to patients of all ages.

“This is a great step toward pharmacists practising to our full



potential to support the health of our communities.

“PSA also supports the authorisation of pharmacists to administer prescribed medicines in the new EPA.

“This is a common sense, consumer-centric approach that will support patients experiencing issues with administering their medications or accessing a health professional to administer them.”

PSA National President Dr Fei Sim said it was vital for regulations around vaccination to be consistent across all states and territories and for them to follow the Qld Govt’s lead.

“At the moment, every jurisdiction in Australia has different regulations around pharmacist-administered vaccinations.” JG

## Soaring market size for weight loss drugs

**INCREASING** demand for obesity drugs was in the spotlight at the world’s largest trade show for the pharmaceutical services industry in Spain last week, as it fuels a boom for firms that fill and assemble the self-injection pens, *Reuters* has reported.

A surge in sales of Novo Nordisk’s drug Wegovy, which launched in the United States in mid-2021, has propelled the Danish drugmaker to become Europe’s most valuable services company.

US rival Eli Lilly has become the world’s most valuable healthcare firm this year as demand for its diabetes drug Mounjaro surges ahead of approval for its use as a weight-loss treatment in the US, expected by the end of this year.

Amid a global obesity crisis, some analysts predict the market for weight-loss drugs could be worth US\$100b (A\$171b) by 2030.

Some companies, like West Pharmaceutical Services, whose share price is up 37% year to



date, are already providing components for the injection pens in order to capitalise on the opportunity.

Other companies specialising in parts of the manufacturing process for the injections such as Medtronic are vying to get a bigger foothold by scaling up their capacity.

Wegovy and Mounjaro, both administered once weekly, are part of a class of drugs called GLP-1 receptor agonists originally developed for type 2 diabetes, which suppress appetite.

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### Dispensary Corner



**TALK** about bouncing back.

MIT professor Moungi Bawendi is a co-winner of this year's Nobel Chemistry Prize for helping develop quantum dots - nanoparticles that are now found in next-generation TV screens and help illuminate tumours within the body.

But as an undergraduate, Bawendi flunked his very first chemistry exam, recalling that the experience nearly "destroyed" him.

The 62-year-old of Tunisian and French heritage excelled at science throughout high school, without ever having to break a sweat, but when he arrived at Harvard University as an undergraduate in the late 1970s, he was in for a rude awakening.

"I was used to not having to study for exams," he told *Yahoo News*, adding that he was intimidated both by the enormous size of the hall and the stern presence of a proctor.

"I looked at the first question and I couldn't figure it out, and the second question I couldn't figure it out," he remembered.

He scored 20 out of 100, the lowest grade in his entire class.

"And I thought, 'Oh my god, this is the end of me, what am I doing here?'"

His message for young people is simple: "persevere", and don't let setbacks "destroy you".

Bawendi certainly learnt to master studying for exams and has gone on to revolutionise the techniques to manufacture quantum dots with precision and at scale, paving the way for their applications today.

## Vacancies on pay panel

THE PBS is seeking expressions of interest to fill three vacancies on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Remuneration Tribunal (PBRT) that commences in May 2024.

Pharmacists may consider applying if they have expertise in regulatory fields, competition research or legal practice relating to medicine and pharmacy.

The PBRT's main function is to determine how much the Australian Govt should pay pharmacists for dispensing medicines under the PBS.

Find out how to apply **HERE**, learn more about PBRT **HERE** and if you have questions email **HERE**.

**MEANWHILE**, Jardiance (empagliflozin 10mg) has been listed on the PBS and can be prescribed from 01 Nov for the treatment of adults with



symptomatic heart failure with left ventricular ejection fraction >40%, including those with preserved ejection fraction (HFpEF).

Prof Andrew Sindone, cardiologist and heart failure expert from Sydney, welcomed the long-awaited development, declaring the HFpEF "treatment drought over".

"For decades, a therapeutic option which improved outcomes in heart failure patients with preserved ejection fraction proved elusive - it was one of the greatest remaining unmet needs in cardiology," said Sindone. *JG*

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### Guild Update

## Small Business Council Board

THE Pharmacy Guild's Western Australian Branch President Andrew Ngeow has been re-elected to the board of the Council of Small Business of Australia (COSBOA) as a Director.

Ngeow filled a casual vacancy in Jun after the Pharmacy Guild's Chief Operating Officer Colm Maguire resigned from the COSBOA Board.

Following his re-election Ngeow says it will be an honour to continue to work with an organisation which represents small business.

"There are over 2.5 million small businesses in Australia, they are the lifeblood which enables Australians to access their essential goods and services," Ngeow said.

"COSBOA is uniquely placed to represent the interests of Australia's small businesses.

"Australian SMEs are facing a challenging time ahead with their own crisis in the rising costs to business," he added.

"I look forward to working on the many challenges which we currently face."

Pharmacy Guild National President Trent Twomey commented that Ngeow's re-election to COSBOA's Board is an important progression in the Guild's partnership with the organisation.

"Community pharmacists who own their practice are also small business people, so it's essential we continue to have engagement with COSBOA to both give and gain insights into small business," Twomey explained.

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**Chris Theodore**

TWC North Brighton, VIC, joined in 2019



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