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Promising trial

A PRECLINICAL study led by Monash University, **HERE**, has discovered a drug combination with the potential to treat one of the most fatal and globally widespread cancers, a type of primary liver cancer called hepatocellular carcinoma.

Tas scope is set to grow

TASMANIAN Health Minister Guy Barnett announced yesterday that pharmacists in the state will soon be able to prescribe medicines for aged care patients, under a new pilot program, following the release of recommendations from the *Review of Tasmanian Pharmacists' Scope of Practice*, which have been accepted by the state gov't in full.

Barnett also revealed that patients will soon be able to access treatment for urinary tract infections (UTIs).

Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) Tasmanian President David Peachey said the move demonstrated a commitment to improving accessible care for Tasmanians.

"It's clear that we need to do more for our older Australians living in residential aged care.

"Allowing pharmacists to write repeat prescriptions or change the dose of an existing drug will free up hundreds of GP hours for complex and emerging needs," Peachey said.

"Pharmacists in many parts of Australia are already initiating treatment for uncomplicated UTIs, supporting safe, timely access to care for many patients," he added.

With the release of the *Review of Tasmanian Pharmacists' Scope of Practice* report, Tas Guild branch President Helen O'Byrne is also "optimistic" that it will pave the way to deliver increased healthcare services and to move pharmacists to work to full scope.

"As a healthcare professional it is upsetting to have a patient present in the pharmacy, with a common condition, and not be able to offer

first-line recognised treatment, immediately," O'Byrne explained "Based on the uptake of services in Qld, we estimate that over 1,000 Tasmanian women will benefit from timely treatment of UTIs in 2024 if this change is implemented."

"We also believe that expanding the scope of vaccinations that can be delivered through Tasmanian community pharmacies makes sense, ensuring people can remain up to date on a range of vaccines.

"The Commonwealth Government has now given community pharmacies access to the National Immunisation Program vaccine stock, which means that eligible people can visit their local community pharmacy and receive the free vaccines covered under this program."

O'Byrne noted that there are other services currently restricted to GPs which could be offered via community pharmacy to increase access and uptake by the people who would most benefit, such as the older Australians who prefer face-to-face services.

Though she did comment that like all healthcare services, "there has to be consideration of how such services are funded, which could include a mix of private, state and Commonwealth funding".

"However people ending up in hospital is undeniably the most expensive of all," she added. *JG*

Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features four pages of the latest news.

Dental Congress

OVER 5,000 dentists from 130 countries will head to Sydney next week (24-27 Sep) for the largest dental event ever held in Australia.

The World Dental Congress will tackle the effects of vaping on the mouth - see more **HERE**.



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Vax tampering

REGISTERED nurse and midwife Kylie Sharee Parmenter allegedly, on two days in Oct 2021, went into the Griffith Chemist Warehouse with another person for COVID-19 vaccinations, and on both occasions tampered with the syringes that the pharmacists had prepared to administer the vaccine.

In its 12 Sep decision, the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal found the complaint proven.

The Tribunal found Parmenter guilty of unsatisfactory professional conduct and professional misconduct, and suspended Parmenter's registration as a nurse and midwife for a period of three months, plus imposed a condition following the period of suspension that she attend counselling with a psychologist or counsellor.

The full decision can be found in NSW Caselaw, [HERE](#).

Epic's pay deal backed by PPA in Qld

UNION members have been successful in negotiating an average 13.8% pay rise over three years for pharmacy staff employed by Epic Pharmacy Services in Qld, with some staff set to receive a pay increase of over 20% in the first year alone.

The union representing pharmacists and technicians, Professional Pharmacists Australia's (PPA) National Board Vice President, Bianca Piljic, who works at Epic Pharmacy Services, took part in the fight to improve pay and conditions for pharmacists and technicians for the group since 2017.

"Epic Pharmacy made its mark by securing a number of private hospital contracts on the basis that it could help hospitals make larger profits by running the once in-house pharmacy department at a fraction of the cost," Piljic said.

"However, cutting costs came at a price, with staffing levels reduced, and wages & conditions wound back. "Outsourced pharmacists and

technicians found themselves working next to new colleagues who were hired on wages that were in some cases 30% lower per hour."

Piljic added that in response, pharmacists and technicians organised their workplaces, fought for, and achieved, the very first Epic Pharmacy Services Enterprise Agreement in Australia in 2018.

"Union members have gone from strength to strength since then and in 2023, through their commitment and efforts, three new enterprise agreements have been negotiated with Epic Pharmacy.

"Our members successfully extended the number of pharmacists and technicians covered by the agreement by 50%, delivering better pay and better conditions for pharmacists and technicians in Qld.

"Since 2017, we have successfully unionised the entire Qld private hospital pharmacy sector, with union-led negotiations at all major hospital pharmacy providers,

including HPS, Epic Pharmacy Services/Icon Group, Ramsay and Mater Hospital.

"This strategy has given every pharmacist and technician, in the state's hospital pharmacy, the opportunity to continue to improve their pay and conditions, and lift the profession's standing."

Union members also recently voted to take industrial action across Ramsay Health Care hospitals in the state as part of their enterprise agreement negotiations and have now negotiated an average 11% pay increase for 2023, with further pay increases to be determined.

"Given the critical role they play in protecting community health, managing high workloads and experiencing significant stress, we don't accept pharmacists and technicians being the lowest paid health workers in Australia," said Piljic, urging more pharmacists and technicians to join PPA to improve pharmacy pay and conditions. *JG*



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Reach out to any of our Consultants for a free and confidential chat to discover how we can assist you.

Gardasil's new indication approved

CSL Seqirus' Gardasil 9 (human papillomavirus 9-valent vaccine, Recombinant) has now been approved by the TGA for use in males aged nine to 45 years, for the prevention of anal cancer, pre-cancerous or dysplastic lesions, external genital lesions and infections caused by nine HPV types.

Previously approved for use in males aged nine to 26 years, the extended age indication is now aligned with the approved age range for females.

This will provide a preventative option for previously unvaccinated people, who may be at increased risk of HPV-related diseases and cancers, regardless of gender.

Although more commonly associated with cervical cancer, HPV-related diseases and cancers also affect males.

More than 80% of anal cancers and 90% of genital warts in Australia are associated with the nine HPV genotypes in Gardasil 9. The UNSW Kirby Institute's



medical epidemiologist and public health physician Prof Andrew Grulich commented that "from 2013, adolescent boys were included in the schools-based HPV vaccination program, which means there are Australian men now aged over 25 years who may not have been offered HPV vaccination.

"While vaccination will not clear a past infection, it may provide protection against future infections in older males, particularly for those who are at higher risk of HPV-related disease," Grulich added.

Dr Jonathan Anderson, CSL Seqirus Executive Medical Director, International Regions, said the extended age range is important news for community pharmacists working in men's health.

"When pharmacists and GPs hear about HPV vaccination, we often think of the well-known school-based program.

"However, despite best efforts, up to one in five adolescents and young adults may have missed out on HPV vaccination at school.

"This indication extension highlights the key role that pharmacists and GPs can play in helping protect people from HPV infection, regardless of gender.

"This is especially important for men at increased risk of HPV-related anal cancer, as there is currently no national screening program for early detection of the disease," Anderson explained.

Pharmacists can now offer HPV immunisation to males aged ≥26 years via private prescription. *JG*

Join APC committee

THE Australian Pharmacy Council (APC) is seeking individuals to join its Examinations Committee.

The Examinations Committee provides assurance and advice on current APC examination activities to protect and uphold the integrity of the exams.

The committee is not a decision-making body and works to provide advice for consideration by the APC CEO.

The following positions are open - two Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander members; an e-assessment/AI expert member; and two expert examinations members.

In addition, the APC needs a member from a non-pharmacy accreditation authority with experience in the delivery of high-stakes exams.

Plus, two pharmacy members each are wanted from an academic and a practising background - see more [HERE](#).

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Dispensary Corner

NOVAK Djokovic is statistically the greatest mens tennis player of all time if you go by Grand Slam wins.

The Serbian superstar recently took out his 24th Slam by beating Daniil Medvedev in the final at Flushing Meadows.

Media attention around his Grand Slam wins is no doubt far more comfortable for Djokovic compared to the attention he was grabbing during the pandemic, where he became one of the most famous opponents to vaccinations, even being escorted out of Australia in 2022 for trying to play the Australian open unvaccinated.

But it seems that fate has a sense of humour after the broadcaster covering the US Open chose one of his winners from the men's final as the shot of the day.

In what can only be described as one of the most amazing ironies, the name of the segment happened to be the Moderna: Shot of the Day. That stings a little.

Bowel cancer awareness

TERRYWHITE Chemmart has partnered with the Jodi Lee Foundation for a consumer campaign titled 'View Your Poo' to encourage Australians to stay vigilant in identifying common symptoms of bowel cancer.

Recent statistics show that nearly 300 Australians receive a bowel cancer diagnosis every week.

Bowel cancer has emerged as the leading cancer killer among those aged 25 to 34 years old.

Brenton Hart, Chief Pharmacist at TerryWhite Chemmart, stresses that bowel cancer is not limited to older individuals.

"The rates of bowel cancer among young people are rising significantly, making it the leading cancer killer for 25-34-year-olds. Awareness and action are crucial.

"If a person experiences symptoms like blood in their poo, changes in bowel habits and pain, bloating and cramping, unexplained fatigue or weight loss, advise them to consult their local GP immediately."

Hart advises Australians to be aware of their family history regarding bowel cancer, as their risk may be higher.

"Speaking to your GP is the best



thing people with a family history of bowel cancer can do as they can provide specific advice and further investigations may apply."

The 'View Your Poo' campaign offers accessible resources, including a dedicated website with the latest information on signs and symptoms, access to the Jodi Lee Foundation Online Bowel Cancer Symptom Checker, and the option to purchase at-home bowel cancer screening kits at participating TerryWhite Chemmart network pharmacies.

See more [HERE](#). JG

Tickets on sale

TICKETS are now on sale for the National Rural and Remote Health Awards, to be held at Mural Hall, Parliament House, Canberra on 13 Nov.

The Awards honour the dedication of individuals and organisations who strive to keep rural and remote communities healthy.

The National Rural Health Commissioner, Adjunct Professor Ruth Stewart, and Assistant Minister for Health and Aged Care, Ged Kearney have both confirmed their attendance at the awards.

People can purchase individual tickets for \$250 or a table of 10 for \$2,300.

Secure tickets and join a cross-section of the national rural and remote health industry, [HERE](#).



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