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Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features three pages of pharmacy news, plus a full page from **Pointers**.

Save and fly soon

POINTRS is offering pharmacy customers ways to save on travel by using cash, credit card and loyalty points. See more on the **back page**.

Committees' Chairs

TWO of the country's peak medical bodies have made appointments.

Prof Robyn Ward is now the Chair of the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee.

Meanwhile, at the Medical Services Advisory Committee, Prof Jonathan Craig is now Chair and Prof Kwun Fong and A/Prof Sarah Norris are now Co-Deputy Chairs.

Peters wins top fellowship

THE 2024 Asthma and Airways Career Development Fellowship was awarded yesterday to food allergy researcher A/Prof Rachel Peters (**pictured**).

This prestigious fellowship is a collaboration between the National Asthma Council Australia and the Thoracic Society of Australia and New Zealand.

Peters plans to utilise this opportunity to create an innovative asthma risk prediction tool for children, focusing on integrating extensive data on food allergies, a factor significantly linked to adverse respiratory outcomes.

This tool aims to pioneer the inclusion of food allergy data to better predict asthma risks.

"This will be the first prediction model that incorporates food allergy data, which is a major contributor to respiratory issues in children," Peters explained.

The need for such a model is pressing, given the high prevalence of food allergies among Australian



children and their potential risk of developing asthma.

Currently leading the HealthNuts and EarlyNuts population-based studies on food allergies and asthma, Peters is uniquely qualified to spearhead this new predictive model.

Her research has shown that infants with food allergies are four times more likely to develop asthma by age six compared to those without food allergies.

"My goal is to develop a model that can aid clinicians in diagnosing and managing asthma early." *JG*

World Health Summit

THE World Health Summit Regional Meeting 2024 will convene in Melbourne, from 22-24 Apr, marking the event's debut in the country.

Hosted by Monash University, the summit will unfold under the banner 'Shape the future of health across Asia and the Pacific', gathering stakeholders across all global health sectors.

The three-day summit will feature over 40 sessions with 150 international speakers, focusing on enhancing global health and reducing health disparities within the Asia-Pacific region.

Monash University's Vice-Chancellor and President, Prof Sharon Pickering, commented that the event aims to foster robust international cooperation in public health, with the university leveraging its standing as a top 50 global institution and leader in medical research - learn more **HERE**.

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Botanix listed on All Ords

DERMATOLOGY company Botanix Pharmaceuticals Limited has been officially included yesterday in the Australian Securities Exchange (ASX) All Ordinaries Index (All Ords). The listing comes as a recognition of the company's strong share performance over the past year and aligns it with the 500 largest companies listed on the ASX. From its bases in Philadelphia and Phoenix, United States, Botanix expressed honour in joining the ranks of the All Ords, marking a period of significant growth and investor confidence. Central to the company's rising share performance is its first and

second line medical treatment for excessive underarm sweating, known as *Sofpironium Bromide* gel, Sofdra, which is awaiting approval from the US Food and Drug Administration, expected by late Jun 2024. Howie McKibbon, Botanix Chief Executive Officer, commented, "we are humbled to acknowledge the confidence investors have shown in our company, as exemplified by our inclusion in the ASX All Ordinaries Index." McKibbon believes the "generous investments" made in Botanix positioned it well for a successful product launch, with preparations underway, further solidifying the company's market position. *JG*

PSA's prescribing position statement out

THE Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) has issued a new position statement advocating for expanded pharmacist prescribing authority, asserting the necessity for community pharmacists to operate at the full extent of their capabilities. In anticipation of the upcoming Scope of Practice Review Issues Paper, the PSA has reaffirmed its stance, emphasising the importance of patient safety and high-quality practice standards. The statement highlights that pharmacists are well-equipped with the competencies required for both prescribing and dispensing medications. PSA National President, A/Prof Fei Sim, said that regulatory frameworks should facilitate, rather than restrict, timely access to medications. "Pharmacists should not be prevented from helping patients when they need care. "Restrictive regulations that hinder pharmacists from assisting patients promptly need to be revised," Sim commented, indicating that while pharmacists in Australia currently prescribe from a limited formulary, their expertise positions them to handle a broader range. Sim points out that the existing

emergency supply provisions are insufficient for mitigating risks when patients face barriers to accessing their medications. The position statement draws attention to international examples where pharmacists prescribe a wider array of medications effectively, and references Australian pilot programs that demonstrate real demand for pharmacist-led prescribing to bolster health system efficiency. With the lengthy process of reviewing the scope of practice, the PSA seeks to adapt its position to meet the changing health needs of Australians. The statement also underlines PSA's dedication to maintaining the integrity of prescribing and dispensing activities, with rigorous clinical governance ensuring the standard of care. "This reaffirmed position underscores our commitment to delivering health services grounded in evidence. "PSA strongly believes in the implementation of evaluation and quality frameworks for prescribing services, ensuring that all health service delivery is responsive to the care and therapeutic needs of patients," Sim declared.

Workshops that offer holistic cancer care

PHARMACIST Suzanne Conti (pictured) is raising awareness about the cancer charity Look Good Feel Better by offering her professional expertise at a number of free in-person and online workshops.

Conti, who works at Pharmacy 777 Cannington, WA, told **Pharmacy Daily** that the workshops she has run on behalf of the charity for cancer patients for years, covers topics from skincare and makeup as well as headwear options, through to grooming, fitness, mobility, and mental wellbeing.

"I know that in pharmacy it's all about giving people the complete care, not just handing them their prescription, but looking after their other symptoms too.

"Offering these workshops to customers suffering from cancer is really giving holistic care," Conti added, especially encouraging other female pharmacists to consider undertaking training to be able to offer these workshops to their local communities.

She is keen for the message to be spread that through these workshops a number of women,



some men and teenagers have found navigating what is obviously a "traumatic journey a lot easier".

The charity stated the workshops demonstrate skincare routines to assist with "side-effects like dryness and sun sensitivity; and provide make-up tips to help correct and conceal redness, sallowness, pigmentation and dark circles, as well as demonstrating techniques for drawing on eyebrows and eyelashes; and offer advice on headwear options, including scarf styling and wig selection". *JG*

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Dispensary Corner

FRANCE'S post office, La Poste, is adding on a new service thanks to the dwindling art of letter writing by going for a tastier venture: premium meals-on-wheels service.

"I predict that by 2035, food deliveries will be our bread and butter," quipped Philippe Wahl, the mastermind behind La Poste's new direction.

La Poste's pivot to food deliveries not only promises to satisfy appetites but also serves as a vital lifeline, ensuring elderly populations receive nutritious meals, contributing to their overall health and well-being.

In fact, they're already serving up over 15,000 meals a day to hungry seniors in cahoots with community centres, hospitals, and culinary wizards.

With village post offices resembling ghost towns, where less than a handful of customers saunter in daily, Wahl revealed to the French Senate that letters and parcels are going the way of the dodo, plummeting from 70% of business in 1990 to a measly 15% by the end of 2024.

Last year, La Poste tantalised taste buds with five million meals, but they're not stopping there. With plans to double their delivery digits for 2024, it seems the only thing La Poste won't be delivering is disappointment.

"We might just save our 65,000 postmen and women as the go-to food delivery squad, even in a world devoid of letters," Wahl mused, perhaps envisioning a new future for the nation's posties.

3D films target tumours

RESEARCHERS at the University of South Australia have developed a new method for treating liver cancer, using 3D printed films that deliver chemotherapy drugs directly to the site of the tumour.

This technique aims to reduce the recurrence of cancer and minimise the adverse side effects typically associated with systemic chemotherapy treatments.

Embedded with the drugs 5-fluorouracil and cisplatin, these 3D films are placed precisely where the cancer has been surgically removed.

By concentrating the drugs on the necessary area, this method effectively targets residual cancer cells while limiting their spread through the body, thus reducing unwanted systemic impacts.

"By localising drug delivery, we aim to kill over 80% of targeted liver cancer cells, improving the efficacy of post-surgical treatments," said Dr Souha Youssef (pictured), the diagnostic project's lead researcher.

Liver cancer is notoriously challenging to treat effectively due to its high recurrence rates, as up to 70% in traditional scenarios



involving tumour removal are followed by systemic chemotherapy.

The new method using 3D films presents a localised treatment alternative that could potentially ease the overall treatment burden on patients.

"Our 3D printed films deliver chemotherapy directly to the site involved, substantially decreasing the drug levels required in the bloodstream, which could enhance the patient's quality of life by reducing toxicity," noted Youssef.

The flexibility of 3D printing technology allows for customised treatment protocols tailored to individual patient needs, adjusting drug types, dosages, and release timelines with more precision.

Further, the films are biodegradable dissolving after treatment. *JG*

Hammond elected as new PSNZ head

MICHAEL Hammond, from Auckland, has been elected last week as the new President of the Pharmaceutical Society of New Zealand (PSNZ).

The two other elected officers were Brooke McKay as Vice President and Bronwen Shepherd as Treasurer.

With McKay set to take parental leave, Sandy Bhawan will step in as acting Vice President until the annual elections in Nov.

The election follows the

resignation of former President Rhiannon Braund and NEC member Paul Larson.

An election was held to fill the two vacancies created by their resignations with Callum Porter and Amanda Stanfield elected to the National Executive Committee.

Hammond expressed eagerness to address the "significant challenges and opportunities" facing PSNZ and its diverse membership representing pharmacists and technicians.



Guild Update

Pharmacy Profile report launched

THE Pharmacy Guild has just released its second edition of the *Pharmacy Profile* report.

The report is part of the Guild's Workforce Capability Project.

It's a top-down view of the pharmacy sector by explaining what a community pharmacy actually is and the variety of different locations.

The report also explains the various roles within pharmacy such as retail pharmacists, industrial pharmacists, hospital pharmacists, pharmacy assistants and pharmacy technicians.

It also contains a breakdown of the workforce by showing how many of those who work in those various roles.

In 2021, there were over 70,300 people working in Australian pharmacy and as of Dec 2023, there were more than 37,300 registered pharmacists, including those who are non-practicing, according to the report.

A flow chart also features, showing the criteria to become a pharmacist and the qualifications and training required in Australia.

The Workforce Capability Project is an ongoing research initiative by The Guild to understand factors contributing to workforce shortages and what will drive change and improvement to ensure pharmacy can attract and maintain the right people with the right skills.

The report is available to everyone **HERE**.

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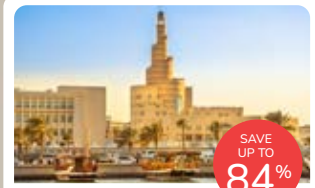
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