

Friday 9th Aug 2024



#### Today's issue of *PD*

Pharmacy Daily today features two pages of news plus full pages from:

- Chemsave
- WholeLife Pharmacy & Healthfoods

#### Chemsave savings

FOR a limited time only, Chemsave is offering a low monthly membership fee to pharmacy owners.

There are discounts on medicines, and with wholesalers - see page three.

#### Grow your base

FOR business growth with a difference, consider joining WholeLife Pharmacy & Healthfoods, as it has strategies to increase your store's foot traffic.

The network offers an expanded number of health services to attract customers.

See more on page four.

#### \$8m govt funding

**DEMENTIA** Australia has received \$8 million in government support to enhance respite support programs for Australians with dementia, their carers and affected families.

CEO Prof Tanya Buchanan highlighted the need for skilled care staff and appropriate services to prevent caregiver burnout and improve overall care quality.

"With dementia cases projected to rise from 421,000 in 2024 to over 812,500 by 2054, this funding is crucial," Buchanan commented.

#### Qld pilot a "game changer"

**THE** Queensland Community Pharmacy Hormonal Contraception pilot officially launched yesterday, providing people with access to hormonal contraception services in community pharmacies across the state.

The Pharmacy Guild of Australia, Queensland branch Vice President. Cate Whalan, said while the pilot services are currently available in a limited number of pharmacies, it will expand rapidly as more pharmacists complete the necessary training and receive authorisation from Queensland Health.

"This pilot is a game changer for women's health in Queensland," said Whalan.

"With services now available, patients across Queensland can expect better access to hormonal contraception services."

She credited Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services, and Women, Shannon Fentiman, for her leadership in making the pilot possible.

The service is open to patients aged 16 years and older, addressing a healthcare need as hormonal contraception is a common reason for medical appointments among women under 40, added Whalan.

The initiative offers an alternative to telehealth for those who previously struggled with a lack of face-to-face appointments, she said.

However, Dr Cathryn Hester, The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners Queensland Chair, expressed strong concerns, arguing that the move prioritises political gain over women's safety.

"The TGA regulates medicines to protect health, and pharmacists' six-hour courses and minor pharmacy renovation don't change that," said Hester.

"This is a political decision, not



evidence-based."

Hester stressed the risks associated with hormonal contraception, noting the TGA's refusal to down-schedule oral contraceptives due to potential adverse events.

"A short training course and rushed pharmacy consultations can't replace the decade of training GPs undergo," Hester added.

She was critical of the pilot's evaluation, likening it to market research rather than rigorous health outcome assessment.

"Health service evaluations should be prioritising health outcomes, not convenience or cost," Hester concluded.

Pharmacy Guild's Whalan said, "community pharmacists participating in the pilot have undergone additional accredited clinical training and been authorised by Queensland Health".

"With community pharmacies widely accessible, the pilot aims to reduce pressure on GPs (PD 08 Aug), and provide patients with more options for managing their reproductive health.

"After all, 97% of people in urban areas live within 2.5km of their nearest community pharmacy, and 83% of regional Australians live within 5km," Whalan added. JG

#### Trust in action

**THE** Australian Pharmacy Council (APC) IPE Colloquium will return next year to address the critical issue of trust, and the industry's role in improving health outcomes for patients.

The healthcare event will be held on 13 May at the Rydges Hotel in Melbourne.

APC CEO Bronwyn Clark stated that the interprofessional event will examine trust within and across healthcare professions, especially through an assessment lens and in light of evolving community expectations in Australia.

"Healthcare is built on trust," said Clark.

"Community trust and expectations are influencing the future of healthcare and threatening health outcomes.

"We must consider the actions needed as educators amid expanding scopes of practice, technology, misinformation, and artificial intelligence," she added.

Clark emphasised the commitment of accreditation authorities to foster a workforce based on trust, collaboration, and sound communication skills.

The colloquium aims to explore how to address these issues through a multiformat program of sessions.

Well-received topics in previous years included student preparedness, virtual reality in education, mental health, interprofessional collaboration, listening to Indigenous voices, and transforming curriculum to create resilient professionals.

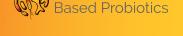
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#### Dispensary Corner

**GOLD** medallist Ethan Katzberg has sparked a flurry of demands for genetic testing from viewers watching the Olympic Games, who were unconvinced of his nationality, reported Uniland.

With his long, wavy blond hair and thick mustache, people are saying Katzberg (pictured below) is an Australian athlete.

Katzberg, who dominated the hammer throw at Paris 2024 with an 84.12-metre toss, proudly represents Canada.

But X [formerly Twitter] users aren't buying it.

"Nah, I want a DNA test, this man is clearly Australian," tweeted a person.

"He is appropriating the Aussie male look," said another. "He's probably a secret Aussie," quipped a third person. Despite the Aussie vibes, Katzberg is 100% Canadian from British Columbia.



He's also a world champion, proving that you can't judge a book or an Olympian by its cover.

#### BPA autism link in boys



**FLOREY** researchers have uncovered evidence linking higher levels of the plastic chemical bisphenol A (BPA) in pregnant mothers to a greater likelihood of their sons developing autism.

Published in Nature Communications, the study, led by Dr Wah Chin Boon and Prof Anne-Louise Ponsonby, supports the hypothesis of a connection between prenatal exposure to plastic chemicals and autism.

The research analysed two large birth cohorts - the Barwon Infant Study in Australia and the Columbia Centre for Children's Health and Environment in the USA.

"Exposure to plastic chemicals during pregnancy has already been associated with autism in some studies," Prof Ponsonby noted.

"Our work is crucial because it

demonstrates one of the biological mechanisms potentially involved."

The study found that BPA can disrupt hormone-controlled male foetal brain development, including silencing the enzyme aromatase, which converts testosterone to neuroestrogen and is vital for male brain development.

This disruption appears to be a key piece of the autism puzzle.

The research revealed that boys born to mothers with higher urinary BPA levels in late pregnancy were 3.5 times more likely to show autism symptoms by age two, and six times more likely to have a verified autism diagnosis by age 11.

The link was particularly strong among boys with lower levels of aromatase, making them more vulnerable to BPA's endocrinedisrupting properties. JG

#### Standard revised

**STANDARDS** Australia has released the updated AS 85000:2024 Australian Community Pharmacy Standard, setting a new benchmark for quality accreditation in community pharmacies around the nation.

Developed by the Pharmacy Guild of Australia with input from over 20 industry stakeholders, the revision emphasises patient safety and modern pharmacy practices.

Simon Blacker, Chair of the Guild's Clinical Governance Committee, said, "the new Standard was designed by the profession, for the profession, ensuring it is fit for purpose now and into the future".

The updated Standard aligns with the National Safety and Quality Primary and Community Healthcare Standards, ensuring that pharmacies deliver safe, highquality care.

Conjoint A/Prof Carolyn Hullick, the Commission's Chief Medical Officer, praised this alignment, noting its role in promoting a nationally consistent approach to safety and quality.

#### **Check** out the latest in Beauty & Wellness

**Every Thursday** in *Pharmacy Daily* 

Do you have a beauty or wellness product? Send it HERE for consideration.



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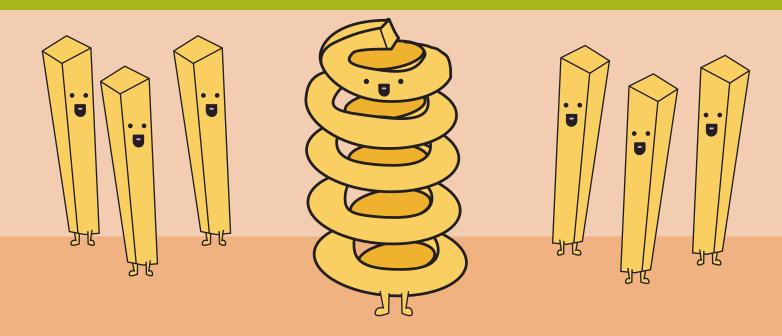
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