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Today's issue of PD

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

- Glucojel
- The Platform Alliance Group
- Meitheal Services

Cash back offer

PHARMXCHANGE will be exhibiting its full suite of products at the annual Australian Pharmacy Professional Conference & Trade Exhibition (APP2024).

Visit stand 17 to hear more about PharmXchange's dynamic, multi-cart marketplace and how it is changing pharmacy trade.

To commemorate APP, PharmXchange is offering 5% cash back up to \$1,000, when people register for APP2024.

CEO Tom Culver said, "we have introduced several upgrades to the platform to share the info at APP".

College launches PAs scope course

THE Australasian College of Pharmacy has just launched a short training course for pharmacy assistants to support the Queensland Community Pharmacy Scope of Practice Pilot.

Developed in partnership with the Queensland branch of The Pharmacy Guild of Australia, the new course covers information about the pilot and its services, patient eligibility and consent and how assistants can support community pharmacists.

"The College understands that for community pharmacy to become the primary healthcare destination for patients, expansion in scope of practice is needed for both pharmacists and pharmacy assistants," commented Melanie Hunt, CEO at the Australasian College of Pharmacy.

"For Queensland community pharmacists to be able to provide expanded healthcare services to their patients, pharmacy assistants need to be able to do more to



support their pharmacist colleagues to deliver the primary healthcare services provided within the Queensland pilot."

The College is the only Australasian pharmacy education provider offering the course for assistants in the state, Hunt added.

"The College recognised the need to upskill pharmacy assistants to ensure the Queensland Pilot's success for patients," said Hunt.

On completion of the course,

assistants will understand the importance of maintaining patient privacy and confidentiality and the process of obtaining the three different patient consents.

Further, assistants should be able to summarise the fee structure for a patient consultation and describe the role of a pharmacy assistant in the delivery of the services.

The mandatory course is accredited for QCPP refresher training and costs \$99 per pharmacy assistant to complete.

It is available online via the College's CPD Library.

Community pharmacies in Queensland with more than three assistants interested in signing up for the course may be eligible for a group enrolment offer and should directly contact the College.

According to a statement from the College, the course may extend to other states and territories in the future, as the pharmacy scope of practice continues to expand.

To learn more **CLICK HERE**. JHM

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SA drug study

SIX out of 10 aged care residents are taking antidepressants, uncovered new research by the Registry of Senior Australians.

It's the first national study investigating the use of these medicines from de-identified data of 779,659 residents from 3,371 aged care homes, between 2006 and 2019.

"We found antidepressants were used by 46.1% of residents in 2006 and this increased to 58.5% of residents in 2019," said study lead Georgina Hughes from the University of South Australia.

The study, published in the *Journal of American Medical Directors Association*, showed that while antidepressants can have positive effects, they can also cause side effects which can lead to falls and fractures.

"It's important they are only used for the right reasons," added Hughes.

TGA's injectables update

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has now amended its guidelines on advertising of cosmetic injectables.

In its latest update, the TGA no longer permits direct or indirect references to prescription medicine in advertising related to cosmetic health services.

The regulatory authority stated that the previous references were only allowed in the context of promoting the service and when using generic non-product specific terms such as 'wrinkle reducing injections'.

Express references to products or ingredients themselves, such as 'Botox' or 'botulinum toxin', were anyway not permitted.

The TGA commented that it considered this a pragmatic approach, which would allow cosmetic clinics who offered these services to differentiate themselves from those that did not.

Recently, the TGA has observed that health services in related



industry areas are advertising the availability of prescription medicines, usually by referring to a class of goods for example 'weight loss injections', 'medicinal cannabis' or 'nicotine vaping products'.

The TGA has interpreted that promoting a health service in this way is also considered an advertisement for a therapeutic good that refers to prescription medicines, which is unlawful.

To learn more **CLICK HERE**. JG

Pharmacy Daily ON LOCATION

APP 2024

Today's issue of PD is coming from the Gold Coast, reporting on APP this week.

WITH just hours to go, **Pharmacy Daily** is flying to the Gold Coast to join over 7,000 pharmacists and industry professionals for APP2024, the largest professional conference in the Southern Hemisphere.

Everyone is waiting excitedly for the all-important announcement of the signing of the 8CPA, as well as the winners of the prestigious Guild awards, and lots more.

We are on our way to join other experienced attendees, who are heading to the venue to grab pre-entry tickets, as organisers have predicted wait times tomorrow could lead to lengthy queues snaking outside.

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Future Health Expo

FROM virtual robots assisting with kids' mental health to innovative cancer treatments, the University of NSW's Future Health Expo will have more than 70 fascinating research projects and initiatives on display tomorrow.

The event will feature projects across therapeutic innovations, healthcare technology, next-generation medicine and various health systems.

"This will be the first in a series of events showcasing UNSW capabilities aligned to the Federal Government's National Reconstruction Fund priority areas, giving government and industry an opportunity to learn more and to work with us," said UNSW's Pro Vice-Chancellor Industry and Innovation Professor Stephen Rodda.

The free event will take place at UNSW's Kensington campus from 3.30-6.30pm on 14 Mar.

FDA approves Wegovy for the heart

NOVO Nordisk's weight-loss drug Wegovy (semaglutide) was approved by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) on Fri for new implications of lowering the risk of stroke and heart attack in overweight or obese adults who do not have diabetes, *Reuters* has reported.

Novo's semaglutide belongs to a class of drugs called GLP-1 agonists and is taken by millions of people already, but the FDA's stamp of approval for the heart benefits is likely to open its use to more patients worldwide.

The new drug approval comes after a large clinical trial was published by the Danish drug maker in Nov.

The study found that the obesity drug reduced the risk of non-fatal heart attack by 28%, non-fatal stroke by 7% and heart-related death by 15%, compared with a placebo, in patients with pre-existing heart conditions.

In the 17,604-patient trial with



a mean duration of 33 months, the difference in heart-protective benefits was seen almost immediately after commencing treatment in those who received Wegovy, researchers said, suggesting the positive impact was due to more than weight loss.

The FDA's approval of the new cardiovascular indications will provide employers and insurers more reason to cover the drug despite its high cost.

First approved by the FDA to treat obesity in Jun 2021, Wegovy's list price is US\$1,349 (A\$2,039) for

a month's worth of injections for patients and is in high demand as it has demonstrated that people lose an average of 15% of their weight after 68 weeks of treatment.

Further, several US obesity specialists have stated they expect Eli Lilly's rival weight-loss drug Zepbound could produce the same or similar heart benefits as Wegovy because both belong to the same class of medicine.

Lilly expects to publish data from its late-stage clinical trial testing Zepbound as treatment for heart failure later this year. *JG*

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Dispensary Corner

A STRONGMAN from Ukraine has broken three *Guinness World Records* using his beard, neck and teeth for the tests.

Dmytro Hrunskyi broke his first world record pulling the heaviest vehicle by his beard, a feat he had tried in 2019, but failed when his beard hairs got yanked out of his chin from the huge strain.

For his second try, the strongman experimented with different braiding techniques hoping to increase the strength of his facial hair.

Hrunskyi was successful in getting his chin whiskers to pull a 5,687-pound (2,579 kg) minibus, breaking the previous record of 4,303 pounds (1,951 kg).

He was confident he could grab the second title of pulling the heaviest vehicle by the neck as he had previously set the record for hauling the heaviest train pulled by the neck.

Hrunskyi also became the first person to pull a 17,107-pound (7,759 kg) truck for the required distance of 16.4 feet (4.8m).

The final record Hrunskyi set was for the most cars pulled with the teeth.

With a driver inside each car to ensure they moved in a straight line, the cars were placed in neutral with the engine off.

The bodybuilder completed the astonishing feat of pulling 19,365 pounds (8,783 kg) of weight in cars and their drivers, for the required distance.

"I dedicate these three records to my country and our soldiers," Hrunskyi told *Guinness World Records*.

ED trends' reports show care issues

TWO new reports by the Bureau of Health Information (BHI) have confirmed what peak pharmacy bodies have been saying for a while - that people are turning up at NSW emergency departments (EDs) in record numbers needing the most urgent care, as they can't get to treatment from a GP in a reasonable amount of time.

The latest results of the *Emergency Department Patient Survey* reflect the experiences of more than 21,000 people who attended one of 77 large EDs in NSW from Jul 2022 to Jun 2023.

Of the 77 large EDs included in the survey, 41 were in rural areas and the report included special insights into the experiences of patients who visited those hospitals between Jan and Mar 2023.

Around one-third (34%) thought,

at the time of their visit to a large rural ED, that their condition could 'definitely' (15%) or 'to some extent' (19%) have been treated by a GP or other health professional.

Of those 34% of respondents, the most common reasons given for not seeing a GP or other health professionals were that those services were closed; or they couldn't get an appointment within a reasonable amount of time.

The majority of patients who did show up at EDs across NSW reported positively about the care they received in 2022-23, said BHI's Chief Executive Dr Diane Watson.

"Despite EDs being busy, patients' ratings for most survey questions were similar to the previous year," said Watson.

Almost nine in 10 patients (87%) said, overall, their care was 'very

good' (60%) or 'good' (27%).

"However, there was significant variation in results for individual hospitals," she added.

Also released today, the *Healthcare Quarterly* report confirmed that during the Oct to Dec 2023 quarter, demand for ED services in NSW remained high.

"Hospitals are treating more patients with the most urgent clinical conditions, with a record number of triage 1 and 2 presentations to NSW EDs in Oct to Dec 2023," said Watson.

Despite this, the report showed that there has been continued improvement in wait time for patients, following record long waits in mid-2022.

However, many patients reported long wait times with just 58.1% leaving within four hours. JG

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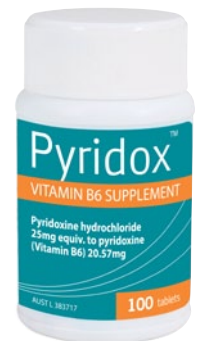
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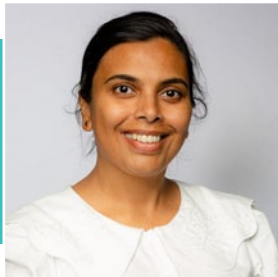
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