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“When we have discussed whether it is worthwhile being part of a brand and paying fees, I have always argued what it costs us is nothing compared to what it would cost to outsource or take the time to do it ourselves.

Having someone else who is better equipped to support me, and allowing me to grow my business, it's invaluable.”

- Carolyn Wynen, Pharmacist and Proprieter
TerryWhite Chemmart Clyde



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Evolve with IPA

INDEPENDENT Pharmacies Group of Australia (IPA) is highlighting how it can support you when it comes to managing your pharmacy.

Head to **page five** to find out more information.

PAG name change reflects its DNA

THE Platform Alliance Group (PAG) announced yesterday at APP2024 that it is changing its name to the Independent Pharmacies of Australia Group (IPA).

“We are hoping that it will truly represent our DNA and it is a true transformation as to how we and our members will conduct ourselves in our stores,” said the group’s founder Steven Kastrinakis (pictured) during a panel session on ‘harnessing pharmacy innovation’ at the largest conference for the profession on the Gold Coast.

Through its combined brands such as Pharmacy Alliance, Advantage Pharmacy, Pharmacy Catalyst, and non-branded independent pharmacies and services provided via other parties, PAG supports over 1,200 pharmacies across Australia.

“There is a real push for this independence, and it is something we totally believe in and what it means for our members working in the way they want to, and it stems from the fact that this group has been vetted by pharmacists for pharmacists.

“There is nothing within this group which I wouldn’t do in my own stores,” Kastrinakis stressed.

He mentioned that the pharmacist “is the hero in their store”, with the group’s business intelligence system Know It All, and the inventory-management platform, Buy It Right.

On the panel too was Kristina Fox, a pharmacy owner from the group’s brand Complete Care, who described in the session the importance of workflow in pharmacy practice, and the innovation she has implemented to manage multiple inputs and streamline tasks.

She described a digital workflow solution that includes a virtual basket for adding and organising tasks, the ability to send customers to the appropriate location within the pharmacy as well as real-time wait-time tracking and automated SMS for patients when their scripts are ready.

“Rather than having customers all crowding around a busy dispensary desk waiting, the software that we have in pharmacy basically timestamps customers as they come in and is integrated into our



dispensary software with real-wait times, which has been an absolute game changer for us,” Fox commented.

“I have a number of politicians coming through my pharmacy and they have all gone ‘oh my gosh this could be a solution to managing patients aside from GP practices,’” Fox concluded. JG

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FIND OUT MORE

Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features four pages of news, plus a cover wrap from TerryWhite Chemmart, an APP2024 photo page, and full pages from:

- Independent Pharmacies of Australia Group
- Direct Chemist Outlet



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A Strong alliance

STRONGROOM AI, an AI-powered medication management and patient drug adherence platform, has announced its acquisition of Member Benefits Australia.

The deal, which is expected to finalise in the second-quarter of 2024, aims to drive advancements in healthcare data and AI, with a focus on bolstering pharmacy services.

By combining StrongRoom's data-driven technologies and Member Benefits Australia's skill in creating customised benefits and loyalty programs, the alliance is set to introduce solutions in medication management, loyalty programs, and enhanced customer engagement.

The partnership is committed to addressing the critical global challenge of effective drug management and minimising adverse events.

Ruston talks recognition

SHADOW Health and Aged Care Minister Anne Ruston said yesterday that governments of the day need to recognise pharmacists as the highly trained healthcare professionals that they are.

"As policymakers we must place greater emphasis on the value of primary care, because that's how we improve our healthcare system," Ruston told delegates at the opening plenary session at APP2024.

"The reality is governments have got to stop treating pharmacists as script fillers and actually start to recognise you as the highly trained health professionals that you are."

Ruston said she hoped there was a good outcome for the 8CPA as the health system was in "absolute crisis" with "lack of adequate and timely access to GPs" and the "collapse" of bulk-billing, despite the tripling of the Medicare rebate.

She mentioned that people are doing one of two things - avoiding seeing their doctor due to costs, or seeing more and more of their

pharmacist for critical primary care.

Ruston mentioned that as she is from a rural area, "it's well known that the pharmacist is the first and often the only primary healthcare provider, especially if patients have to travel hundreds of kilometres to see a doctor".

"That's why in this climate of compounding challenges it is the thing that concerns me the most because that is going to be an extra burden on our healthcare system."

She explained that as people don't get the early diagnosis and treatments needed, down the track it means "they're going to rely more and more heavily on the more acute services in our system".

"It's not just a bad outcome for hospitals or the health system, it's a bad outcome for all Australians, as taxpayers are paying for it.

"And that's why I'm absolutely obsessed with this concept of value and access rather than a pursuit through a race to the bottom, on cost," said Ruston. JG

Insomnia therapy

A **NEW** digital program has been developed by sleep experts at Flinders University to help people who are suffering from insomnia.

The program is focused on cognitive behavioural therapy for insomnia (CBTi).

While the effectiveness of CBTi is known, there is a shortage of CBTi-trained psychologists, with only 1% of insomnia sufferers seeing these professionals while 90% are relying on sleeping pills.

"We know that CBTi improves insomnia, mental health and quality of life and we want to see more people accessing this treatment because it can reduce the need for sleeping pills or other interventions which may not tackle long-term sleep problems," said Dr Alexander Sweetman, who led the research published in *Frontiers in Sleep*.

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APP
2024

WIZARD *pharmacy*



Pharmacy in the fast lane with APP2024

THE biggest pharmacy event on the annual calendar is now underway, with the *Pharmacy Daily* team also in the mix on the Gold Coast to attain exclusive insights from across the industry, including details on the highly anticipated 8CPA and the winner of Pharmacy of the Year (PD 14 Mar).

The Australian Pharmacy Professional Conference & Trade Exhibition (APP) 2024 is taking place at the Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre between 14-17 Mar, with up to 7,000 proprietors, pharmacists, interns, students, pharmacy assistants and industry professionals expected to gather at the annual event.

This year's speaker line-up will include Peter Dutton, the Federal Opposition Leader, who took to the stage this morning, as well as a luncheon with Queensland Health Minister Shannon Fentiman.



BERNARD Steele, Brenton Hart, Janice Hoogeveen, Nick Munroe, Krystal Tresillian, Sarah Tait, Elena Newey and Vicky Dimitriadis from Terrywhite Chemmart.



JARED Plit, Lucy Lewis, Kellie Christensen, and Rory Collins at the ever-glowing Afterpay setup.



GEORGE Polimenakos, Beacon Medical with Lauren Stark and Ryan Tattle from Canview.



KYLEE Hateley, Fiona Rice, Scott Simmons, Felicity Edmunds and Craig Hickley between the Guild Insurance and Gold Cross stand.



ABBY West, Hamish Larkin and Stan Goma from StrongRoom AI.



IT'S all smiles from Raven's Recruitment's Leanne Virtue, Sheryll Dobson, Charmain Fry, Amal Amaneddine, Debbie Capuano and Heidi Dariz.



ATTENDEES taking on the challenges at the APP Fun Zone.



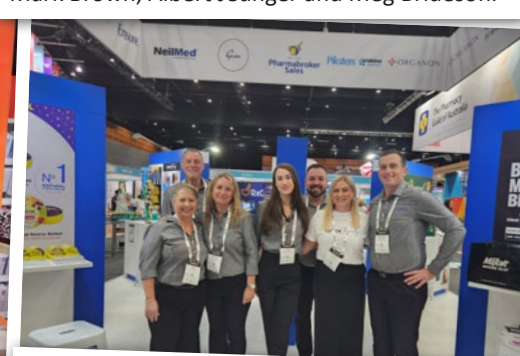
WILLACH'S Simon Gerrits, Jan Pendrakowski, Mark Brown, Albert Jeunger and Meg Brideson.



GLOOP'S Penny McShane and Jacqui Higgins standing by.



PDL'S Steph Atmore, Karina Perez, Alice Faull, Jess Hadley, Gary West and Amy Minion.



TRINA Jover, Lance Hames, Jeanine Harris, Zara Minhinnick, Mark Casey, Rachael Ferguson and Mathew Kirchner from Pharmabroker Sales.



SIGMA Healthcare's Clare McDowall, Christina Bolle, Rachael Chandler and Sarah Xiberras.



BRAD Lumb, Andrew Matthews, Mark Low, Adam Thomas, Jason Bratuskins, Rudhira Vikasini and Byron Mitchell from MedView.



Dispensary Corner

A MAN who was kept alive for 70 years thanks to an iron lung developed in the 1920s has died this week, aged 78.

Paul Alexander was just six years old in 1952 when he contracted polio and became paralysed from the neck down.

Polio does not directly damage the lungs, but attacks motor neurons in the spinal cord, weakening the communication between the central nervous system and muscles, and paralysing the muscles so that breathing is no longer possible.

An iron lung works by using negative pressure to push air into the lungs, mimicking the way a respiratory system works to help the patient breathe, who lies inside a metal cylinder.

An eight-year-old girl in 1928 was the first to use the iron lung, which was created by a team at Harvard University.

Eventually, 1,000 iron lungs were used in the United States and 700 in the United Kingdom.

By the 1960s, they were replaced by modern-age ventilators, and the last person to use an iron lung in the UK died in Dec 2017 at the age of 75.

Despite his serious health condition, Alexander was a courtroom lawyer, painter, traveller and author of *Three Minutes for a Dog - My Life in an Iron Lung*.

His family announced the news on Facebook but did not provide a cause of death.

"What a flirt," his brother wrote.

"He loved good food, wine, women, long conversations, learning and laughing."

Dutton: "stick to your guts"



THE Federal Opposition Leader Peter Dutton told attendees at APP2024 today that it's time to celebrate the 36,000 pharmacists and 70,000 staff across more than 5,000 local community pharmacies around Australia.

"The health system collapses without that commitment and that culture of care for your patients," Dutton told the packed room.

"You don't just make up prescriptions, dispense medications and advice about dosages but are often the first port of call for medical care, particularly for older Australians."

He emphasised that pharmacists are the "only presence" in many rural areas where "general practice can't keep up or just isn't there".

"You help clean wounds, deliver immunisations, and manage chronic diseases, and are at the centre of the national character of

Australia; so thank you."

Dutton spoke about his personal health struggle with asthma and acknowledged the help he and his family have received from his local pharmacist over the years.

He spoke about the pain of the 60-Day Dispensing and how it was "thrust" onto the profession and that it was "remarkable" how the Guild "stood up and has led, I believe, to a better outcome as a result of the negotiations that have taken place since".

"It takes a lot of guts to stand up as an industry to the government of the day.

"People worry about retribution, further negotiations and what can happen in the future.

"But the Guild is on the right track...stick to your guts, as you are also working in the national interest of your patients," Dutton concluded to huge applause. *JG*

New kidney testing device shows promise

FLINDERS University has developed a new portable testing device for kidney disease, which is a growing problem that affects 8-10% of the world's population.

The device has potential to be used for more regular monitoring of these patients for disease progression, as well as for

screening high-risk populations for early interventions.

Professor Youhong Tang, who published results of the device's latest tests **HERE**, said the innovation could offer accessible and affordable urinalysis to assess kidney function in remote areas of Australia.

Future of Health

MEDICAL professionals gathered yesterday at the Future of Health Expo at the University of New South Wales to discuss closing the gap on women's health, from advocating for women in leadership to featuring more females in clinical trials.

"I really think we need more data on women," said A/Prof Cheryl Carcel from The George Institute for Global Health.

"We need enough data on the safety and efficacy in clinical trials to be able to say that [certain] drugs and devices are as good for women as they are for men.

"And to do that, we need to enrol more women in clinical trials," she explained.

Meanwhile, Reshma Gupta from Virtus Health discussed the need for more women in research and policymaking.

Even within her own business, most of the research academic papers and commercialisation of products is led by men, despite women comprising 85% of its workforce.

Also on the panel was Hannah Gandevia, founder of Maeve, a new dedicated women's health clinic set to open in Sydney shortly, combining primary care specialists and allied health.

"Our mission at Maeve is to help women thrive and to look after the whole woman throughout her life," she said.

"We're looking forward to welcoming women in. Come on, the rest of the gang's here.

"Let us teach you about the magic of your body and listen and learn together about why we're here," Gandevia added.



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