

Guild's new leaders

FRESH faces from the Community and Pharmacy Support Group (CAPS) have won several Pharmacy Guild of Australia state elections, as declared by the Australian Electoral Commission yesterday.

In NSW, Christine Kelly, Emil Demyane, Sunit Ruparelia, and Silva Destro Minassian will join the branch committees.

Members who missed out were branch President David Heffernan, Vice President Adele Tahan, Paul Jones, and past branch President Rick Samimi, who was defeated by Matthew Burton.

Incumbents Catherine Bronger and Mario Barone held their seats and Lauren Wilson won from mid north coast.

In Victoria, Perri McCarthy and Sam El-Ahmad won, while in Queensland, Jess Burrey and James Lester were victorious.

Five people won in the Northern Territory - to see full list of winners, [CLICK HERE](#).

Telstra Health buys Fred IT

TELSTRA Health is set to acquire the remaining 50% stake in Fred IT Group, an Australian technology provider for the pharmacy sector (*PD* breaking news).

The acquisition marks the culmination of a decade-long joint venture between Telstra Health and Fred IT Group.

Telstra Health, which initially acquired a 50% interest in Fred IT in 2013, will purchase the remaining shares from the Pharmacy Guild of Australia (Victoria branch).

Fred IT co-founder and CEO Paul Naismith, will remain in his role, along with the existing team.

"Pharmacy stands as a cornerstone within Australia's healthcare industry, serving as a primary touchpoint for countless Australians," said Naismith.

"With Fred IT becoming wholly owned by the Telstra Health group, pharmacists are poised to more seamlessly integrate into the digital health landscape of the health and aged care sectors, empowered by

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New medication

NOVA Pharmaceuticals' new emergency contraception Novella-1 (levonorgestrel 1.5mg) has announced a launch offer with a best value guarantee for pharmacists.

Learn about the pharmacist-only drug on the [page five](#).

an expanded scope of practice."

The acquisition presents opportunities for the long-term growth of Telstra Health in Australia, said Managing Director, Elizabeth Koff.

"Fred IT has been a market leader in the digital pharmacy space and is well-positioned to benefit from the increasing shift towards digitisation of medication services that is underway across Australia."

The investment is the latest in a series of strategic partnerships for Telstra Health which was established in 2013. *JG*

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See more on [page four](#).

Today's issue of *PD*

Pharmacy Daily today features three pages of news, including our **Beauty & Wellness** feature plus full pages from:

- **Pharmacium**
- **Nova Pharmaceuticals**
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Swisse named Australia's Most Trusted Vitamin Brand for 2024

SWISSE Wellness has been recognised as the Most Trusted Vitamin Brand for 2024, as part of the *Reader's Digest* Trusted Brands Australia Awards.

Based on an independent survey conducted by leading research agency Catalyst, with over 4,000 consumers placing their votes, the accolade sees Swisse win the coveted title over its major competitor, Blackmores, for the first time in 10 years.

"This prestigious recognition underscores Swisse's unwavering commitment to quality, innovation, building and maintaining consumer trust," a spokesperson for the health and wellness company said.



"The award, determined by the votes of Australian consumers, reflects the confidence that consumers place in Swisse products to support their health and wellbeing.

"With a rigorous selection and voting process, this accolade is a testament to the brand's

dedication to excellence and customer satisfaction."

Swisse products, including vitamins, supplements & skincare, are stocked in pharmacies around the country, including Chemist Warehouse, TerryWhite Chemmart, Priceline Pharmacy, and Blooms The Chemist.

Sweet new additions



AUSTRALIAN brand Glasshouse Fragrances has released two new dessert-inspired scented candles as part of its Sugar Coated collection, which is "all about celebrating the sweet life".

The Mint Condition 380g Soy Candle (RRP: \$59.95) blends smooth, velvety cocoa and the refreshing zing of peppermint, inspired by mint slices and chocolate ice-cream.

Poured in a pearlescent vessel and a striped box, Mint Condition has the refreshing notes of spearmint leaves and peppermint, complemented by milk chocolate, honey and sugary vanilla.

Candle lovers can also indulge their senses with the brand's new Eager for Espresso 380g Soy Candle (RRP: \$59.95), which features mouth-watering notes of brown sugar, roasted coffee, vanilla smoky woods, and more.

The new scent is designed to invoke the classic taste of tiramisu - think rich coffee-soaked ladyfingers layered with creamy mascarpone and cocoa.

Glasshouse Fragrances' products can be found at various retail pharmacies around Australia, including ChemistWorks and The Pharmacy Network.

Ego pours the Gravy

EGO Pharmaceuticals, the parent company of popular retail pharmacy brands such as QV Skincare, SunSense and DermAid, has appointed Sunday Gravy as its new creative agency.

Tenille Taylor, ANZ Marketing Manager at Ego Pharmaceuticals, shared the company is excited to partner with the Vic-based agency to take its 150 well-known brands to the next level, and said that Sunday Gravy is "just as passionate about long-term brand building and collaboration as we are".



A mist-ical skincare experience with Jurlique



JURLIQUE has enhanced its Rosewater Balancing Mist, which has been reformulated with the new, specially-grown Jurlique Rose extract proven to improve skin barrier function and hydration.

Acting as the ultimate makeup primer, a few spritzes of the mist delivers instant hydration to protect the skin and restore its

natural glow, helping makeup to go on more smoothly.

The face mist range includes other popular variations like the Lavender Hydrating Mist, which contains rich plant-based antioxidants and uses lavender extract to help protect the skin and rebalance dryness to restore a natural glow.

Also back by popular demand is the limited edition Sweet Violet & Grapefruit Hydrating Mist, which is now here to stay.

This product is infused with citrus and floral notes, while sweet violet extract helps improve skin moisture levels, and plant-based antioxidants help replenish and protect dehydrated skin.

The 100ml Jurlique mists retail for \$55 and are stocked at National Pharmacies around Australia.

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Dispensary Corner

EVERY US presidential election provides its share of wacky moments and personalities, even with former President and Republican nominee Donald Trump staring down the barrel of a criminal conviction.

The 2024 'disruptor' candidate likely to get in the way of Trump and current President Joe Biden is Robert F Kennedy Jnr, widely known as the propagator of numerous scientifically disproven claims about vaccines and various conspiracy theories.

For such a vocal anti-vaxxer, Kennedy is also known for openly discussing his own past medical issues, including a time when he had a parasite infecting part of his brain and another incident of mercury poisoning.

Democratic strategist Eric Koch labelled Kennedy's campaign as a "vanity project" that isn't worth wasting a vote.

The brain-eating worm story stems from a 2012 deposition when Kennedy was told by a doctor he had a dark spot on his brain, which was picked up after scans relating to complaints of memory loss and foginess, the *New York Times* reported.

Kennedy now tells people the worm died after eating part of his brain.

Around the same time as the brain worm, Kennedy said he suffered from mercury poisoning, with tests returning levels ten times above safe levels, resulting in brain fog.

For all the health issues, anybody would think somebody was trying to assassinate another Kennedy.

EC pill not stocked by all

THE availability of first-line oral emergency contraceptives in Australian community pharmacies is concerning, with a national survey revealing that nearly one-third of pharmacies do not stock the ulipristal acetate pill, according to Flinders University.

The study found that only 70% of the 233 pharmacies surveyed stocked ulipristal acetate emergency contraceptive (EC) pills, compared to 98% for levonorgestrel.

Ulipristal acetate was significantly less available in rural and remote areas and was more expensive when stocked.

"Despite evidence that unintended pregnancies are more common among those living in rural and remote areas, this highlights a clear equity issue," researchers stated in the journal *Contraception*.

"Despite medical guidelines recommending it as the first-line oral emergency contraceptive, ulipristal acetate is less likely to be available and is more expensive," said A/Prof Luke Grzeskowiak of Flinders University and the South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute.

He suggested that government subsidies might be necessary, as



medication costs range from \$26 to \$80.

First author Tahlee Stevenson from the University of Adelaide, highlighted the need to understand why pharmacies are not stocking ulipristal acetate.

Factors such as low consumer awareness, higher prices, or a lack of understanding among pharmacy owners about evidence-based recommendations could be influencing this issue.

Stevenson emphasised the importance of addressing these factors to ensure timely and cost-effective access to preferred emergency contraceptive methods.

She noted that by only stocking levonorgestrel, pharmacies might hinder their ability to follow clinical guidelines, affecting consumers' access to suitable EC options. *JG*

Pfizer's Velsipity for UC gets TGA approval

PFIZER Australia has announced the TGA approval of Velsipity (etrasimod) for treating adults with moderate-to-severe active ulcerative colitis (UC).

This new medication is intended for patients who have not responded to conventional, biologic, or Janus kinase inhibitor therapies.

Velsipity is administered as a once-daily 2mg tablet starting from the first day of treatment.

It works as a sphingosine 1-phosphate receptor modulator, reducing the number of activated lymphocytes in the tissue by partially and reversibly blocking their movement from lymphoid organs into the blood.

The important approval comes as an estimated 100,000 people in Australia live with Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis, and this number is expected to increase in the future.

DFAT meds alert

EACH year, Australians travelling abroad face legal troubles due to carrying or using prescription drugs improperly, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) told *Pharmacy Daily*.

DFAT is urging all pharmacists to inform customers about the risks involved.

According to a spokesperson, one major issue is travellers carrying medications bought in Australia that may be illegal in other countries.

Some medications might be restricted or require a permit in the destination country.

If Australians need to purchase medications overseas, they should ensure they get them from reputable sources and verify the composition.

DFAT also highlighted the risks, noting, "overseas regulatory standards for drug purity and strength may differ from Australia's, leading to unexpected effects".

"Misuse of these drugs has resulted in severe mental distress and hospitalisations for some travellers."

Pharmacists need to remind travellers that only prescription medicine for personal use can be taken overseas, and it should always be in its original packaging with a prescription label.

Travellers should check the legality of the medicine in the destination country, and pack enough for the trip's duration.

Customers should also understand local attitudes towards certain illnesses and medications, and know local emergency contact numbers, which are available on DFAT's Smarttraveller website [HERE](#).



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