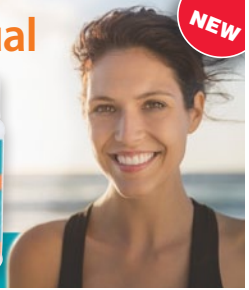


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## Today's issue of PD

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

- Dispense Assist
- Glucojel
- Nova Pharmaceuticals

## Low-cost solution

**DISPENSE** Assist is a low-cost staffing solution with dispensary technicians available 24/7 at rates as low as \$6.37 per hour for sessions from 30 minutes to two hours. Learn more on **page three**.

## \$10k giveaway

**PHARMACY** customers have a chance to win \$10,000 when they purchase Glucojel jellybeans, so make sure your shelves are fully stocked.

Check out **page four** for more information, as well as learn how the jelly beans can help you increase your profit.

## Merger valued at \$25bn

**LEGAL** firm Gilbert + Tobin, which secured the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) clearance for the merger of Sigma Healthcare and Chemist Warehouse yesterday (**PD 07 Oct**), has valued the new market powerhouse at over \$25 billion.

The ACCC, after a detailed investigation, confirmed it will not oppose the merger, based on Sigma's court-enforceable undertaking (**PD 01 Oct**).

Despite the ACCC's approval, the Pharmacy Guild of Australia has raised concerns, cautioning that consolidation will reduce wholesaling choices, lead to higher prices for patients.

"Reduced competition ultimately leads to higher prices for patients and lower service standards," a Guild spokesperson said.

"It is disappointing the ACCC accepted limited behavioural undertakings and did not explore structural undertakings."

"Market consolidation in health services like oncology, general



practice, pathology and now community pharmacy, is not in the best interests of patients.

"It leads to non-competitive duopolies, an unequal distribution of doctors, and a reduction in smaller businesses better equipped to provide local and personalised health services to their communities," he said.

Gilbert + Tobin's Competition, Consumer + Market Regulation team, led by partners Elizabeth Avery and Liana Witt, played a critical role in navigating the merger's complex regulatory hurdles.

"The case demonstrated the importance of rigorous analysis of the evidence in light of a complex regulatory landscape." JG

## Biosimilars Week

**AUSTRALIA'S** Generic and Biosimilar Medicines Association (GBMA) is using Global Biosimilars Week, running from 11-15 Nov, to emphasise the benefits of biosimilar medicines for patients and the economy.

Although biosimilars have improved treatment options for chronic conditions worldwide, Australia's adoption rates lag behind other OECD nations, according to GBMA's independent Chair, Prof Jane Halton.

"A single biosimilar on the PBS could save up to \$100m, allowing funds to be reinvested in healthcare," said Halton.

## Emergency med

**NOVA** Pharmaceuticals emergency contraception Novella-1 is available now to order for dispensing by pharmacists to appropriately counselled customers - see **p5**.

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### Dispensary Corner

**USING** a fan and wetting the skin reduces the risk of deadly cardiac strain in hot and humid weather, but for older folks who are at high risk of a heat-induced event, it's not that simple.

A new study by the University of Sydney and Montreal Heart Institute found fans can be a lifesaver for seniors in muggy weather - even debunking the US Center of Disease Control's previous guidance.

The researchers tested various cooling tricks, like combining fans with a spritz of water, on older participants in two sauna-like scenarios: one hot and steamy (38°C, 60% humidity) and another hot and bone-dry (45°C, 15% humidity).

In humid conditions, the fan-water combo worked like a charm, keeping hearts calm.

But in dry heat, the fans backfired, pushing more hot air onto already-overheated bodies.

The study revealed that in scorching dry air, fans can triple cardiac strain - a risk no one needs in their golden years, so on the next searing day, stick to a good splash of water.

## PSA's annual report out

**THE** Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) has released its 2023/24 annual report, celebrating key advancements for the organisation and the whole pharmacy profession.

Among its achievements, PSA secured the first-ever Strategic Agreement on Professional Pharmacist Practice with the Australian Government, reinforcing the critical role of pharmacists in healthcare and expanding their scope of practice.

The PSA emphasised medicines safety with updated Professional Practice Standards and the release of APF26, the latest Australian



Pharmaceutical Formulary edition.

These tools, combined with targeted training, support community pharmacists in meeting new demands.

PSA also advocated for state and federal reforms to broaden pharmacists' roles, initiating pilot programs like Queensland's Scope of Practice Pilot and enabling pharmacists to manage urinary tract infections, provide vaccinations, and support chronic disease management.

Reflecting on the past year, PSA National President A/Prof Fei Sim and CEO Steve Morris affirmed the organisation's commitment to its members, stating their focus remains firmly on providing professional resources at every stage of a pharmacist's career as needed to "not just survive but thrive". *JG*

To read the report, **CLICK HERE**.

### Broaden focus

**A MONASH** University-led global study has revealed gaps in antimicrobial education among pharmacy, medicine, nursing, dentistry, and veterinary students, urging broader interdisciplinary training.

The study found that currently education focuses mainly on misuse, underscoring the need for comprehensive skills to address the mounting threat of antimicrobial resistance to planetary health.

### Pharma exec wins

**ASTRAZENECA'S** Senior Director of Production Mina Patel has received the 2024 QUT Outstanding Alumnus Award, recognised for her contributions to the pharmaceutical industry.

Patel (**pictured** below), holds an Associate Diploma in Applied Science and a Bachelor of Applied Science (Applied Chemistry) from QUT.

With over 30 years experience, Patel has held senior roles at Johnson & Johnson, Pfizer, and Merck Sharp.

Inspired by family members with chronic health issues, Patel pursued a career focused on the production and safety of medicines.

"I wanted to understand how these medicines are made... how they are tested and the safety of them for patients," Patel said.

As a STEM advocate, Patel encourages women to "take a leap of faith, jump in, be curious".



## Time to rethink your dispensary set-up?

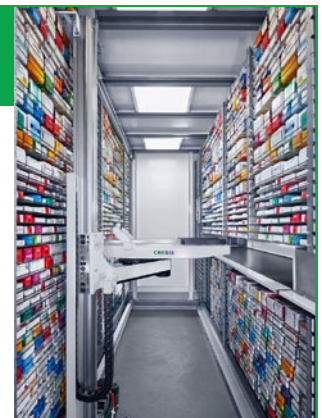
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