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Pharmacies of
Australia**
Group

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Pharmacies of Australia Group**,
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Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features three pages of news, plus a cover page from the Independent Pharmacies of Australia Group, and a full page from PharmXchange.

Business support

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

Find out how IPA's strategies can streamline your operations on the cover page.

Wesfarmers reveals health risks persist

AUSTRALIA'S cardiometabolic health remains below pre-pandemic levels, according to the inaugural *Wesfarmers Health: Australia's Health Index*.

The report, launched in Canberra yesterday by Wesfarmers Health Managing Director Emily Amos and Assistant Minister for Health Ged Kearney, highlights significant health challenges, particularly in heart disease and stroke risk.

Wesfarmers Health aims to support public health through free screenings at SiSU Health Stations across the country, providing real-time data to track health trends which could inform future public health policies.

Key findings reveal Australia's 2024 health score is 92, indicating an 8% rise in the odds of having two or more cardiometabolic risk factors

TWC, Sanofi align for RUM initiatives

TERRYWHITE Chemmart (TWC) and Sanofi have reinforced their commitment to the safe and eco-friendly disposal of unwanted medications through the Return of Unwanted Medicines (RUM) project.

Now in its 25th year, RUM has disposed of over 12.5 million kilograms of medicinal waste, helping to protect the environment.

TerryWhite Chemmart doubled the number of RUM bins collected across its network, increasing from 1,500 in 2023 to 3,129 in 2024.

This boost came during their annual RUM awareness campaign, which runs from late Aug to mid-

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Sep, but their commitment to safe medication disposal continues year-round.

Recently, Sanofi's leadership, including Liz Selby, Country Lead and Head of Pharma, and Mike Zhang, General Manager Vaccines, met with leaders from TerryWhite Chemmart, including Executive General Manager, Nick Munroe and Acting Chief Pharmacist, Krystal Tresillian, to discuss ongoing initiatives for the RUM project.

"Together with Sanofi, we are committed to reminding Australians of the importance of disposing of their unwanted medications safely," Munroe said.

"By bringing expired or unused medicines to their local TerryWhite

Chemmart pharmacy, Australians can help reduce environmental harm and eliminate the risks associated with improper storage and disposal," he commented.

"This partnership aligns with Sanofi's commitment to addressing climate change by minimising the environmental impact of our products and operations, including eco-design of packaging, decarbonisation, and waste reduction efforts," added Selby.

Toni Riley, Program Director of the RUM project, reflected on the collaboration, and stated, "this partnership between TerryWhite Chemmart, Sanofi, and RUM is unprecedented in its scope".

"It allows us to connect with Australians throughout the lifecycle of their medicines.

"The missing piece of the puzzle is ensuring that individuals with out-of-date or unwanted medications in their homes take action by using our free and convenient service." **JG**

Pictured: Munroe, Selby, Tresillian, and Zhang.



compared to 2018.

Gen Z leads in daily smoking rates, and almost one million Australians are at extreme risk of a heart attack or stroke.

Nearly half of Australians face elevated heart disease risks, and almost 60% do not regularly check their blood pressure.

Amos emphasised the growing demand on health services, driven by an ageing population and chronic disease.

Pictured: Emily Amos, Ged Kearney, A/Prof Karam Kostner, Director Cardiology, Mater Hospital Brisbane.

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Tuesday 15 October

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To find out more about stock efficiencies, see the [back page](#).

Naloxone push

IT IS Queensland Mental Health Week (05-13 Oct) and, the state's Pharmacy Guild of Australia and the Mental Health Commission are raising awareness of the national Take Home Naloxone program.

Naloxone, available for free at pharmacies, can reverse opioid overdoses.

Pharmacist Emily Turkovic, whose brother died from an accidental overdose, said, "if there was access to Take Home Naloxone he may be here today".

"Every Australian has the potential to save someone's life - it could be your friend, neighbour, a stranger or even your brother.

"One life lost to a reversible opioid emergency is one too many," Turkovic added.

Pharmacy Guild of Queensland President Chris Owen commented, "it has no effect if opioids are not present...we encourage all community members...to carry naloxone."

To register to become an approved provider of the Take Home Naloxone program, [CLICK HERE](#).

Jabs give economic boost



A NEW report, commissioned by GSK, reveals that increasing investment in adult immunisation could generate \$1.1 billion in annual economic benefits.

The report, *Prevention: A Productivity Superpower*, launched at Parliament House in Canberra this week, shows that every dollar spent vaccinating adults against common illnesses yields a \$3.50 economic return by reducing demands on healthcare, govt services, and carers, while boosting workplace productivity and improving life expectancy.

Conducted by Evaluate Consulting, the study highlights the cost-effectiveness of preventing diseases like shingles, influenza, and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV).

Vaccinating adults aged 50 and over for shingles could yield an annual \$152 million return, influenza vaccinations could bring \$303 million, and vaccinating high-risk individuals aged 60-74 for RSV could deliver \$687 million annually.

Saul Eslake, an independent economist, described immunisation as "one of the most economically effective public health measures,

second only to clean water".

He added, "as the population ages, vaccinations become even more valuable by helping Australians to live well for longer".

A public health physician, A/Prof John Litt emphasised the need to ensure all Australians, regardless of location or economic status, have access to vaccinations.

"Under-investment in vaccination disproportionately affects our most disadvantaged communities," he said, urging for enhanced vaccine access to secure Australia's health and economic future.

GSK Australia's Executive Country Medical Director, Dr Alan Paul, said the report aims to guide government decisions on healthcare investment.

"This report is designed to help government make decisions that ensure economic sustainability," Paul added.

The report calls for reforms to prioritise adult immunisation within the National Immunisation Program, advocating for a 95% vaccination target for adults, similar to the childhood program, and for increased public awareness around its benefits. *JG*

Abortion pill spike

US SCIENTISTS have reported a significant rise in online prescriptions for direct-to-patient abortion drugs in the year following the country's Supreme Court's decision to overturn the federal right to abortion.

Published in *JAMA Network Open*, the study found that the average number of prescriptions per day rose from 88.5 in Mar 2022 to 201.5 by Mar 2023.

Notable spikes occurred after the early leak of the court's draft decision and after the official ruling.

Most of the prescriptions were issued by online pharmacies, with the majority sent to states with supportive abortion policies.

The researchers highlight the critical role online pharmacies play in ensuring abortion care access in the post-Roe v. Wade landscape in the US.

"The findings underscore the importance of online platforms in delivering essential reproductive healthcare," the researchers stated, urging the removal of barriers to accessing abortion medications through online pharmacies.



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Dispensary Corner

A JOHNS Hopkins study has revealed that where you put your arm during a blood pressure test could be the difference between "you're fine" and "you're basically a ticking time bomb".

Researchers tested three common arm positions - resting on a desk, on a lap, and hanging there like a forgotten limb - and the results were alarming.

Apparently, resting your arm on your lap can make your blood pressure seem four points higher, while letting it dangle at your side can add seven points to your systolic pressure.

Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine's blood pressure expert Tammy Brady confirmed that these findings were a big deal.

In the study, 133 brave souls were subjected to multiple tests such as emptying their bladders, taking a short stroll, then being seated and having their blood pressure taken in various positions.

The takeaway was that if you're getting your blood pressure checked, make sure your arm is firmly supported on a sturdy desk, which under test conditions, worked better than the other methods.

So next time you're at the pharmacy, remember: bad arm support could be the reason you're handed a prescription for meds instead of a high-five.



First Nations telehealth project grows

A **NEW** research project aims to improve healthcare access for remote Indigenous communities in Western Australia through the use of technology.

Building on the success of a virtual emergency services pilot in a community of 700-800 residents, the project will explore expanding the Western Australia Country Health Service (WACHS) Command Centre into additional communities.

These services, supported by Aboriginal Medical Services, have been in use for over three years, providing essential virtual care.

In addition to the WACHS, the collaboration involves The University of Sydney (USYD), and the Digital Health Cooperative Research Centre (DHCRC).

Melissa Vernon, WACHS Executive Director of Strategy and Change,



was clear about the impact of virtual healthcare.

"Technology provides a crucial link in delivering timely medical assessment and intervention; reducing the burden of travel; improving healthcare equity for Aboriginal populations; and has a

significant social impact on health outcomes and overall wellbeing."

The University of Sydney will lead the research into the economic costs and benefits of extending these services.

"It is critical that accessible virtual healthcare services in these areas are both accurately costed and are appropriately adapted to the needs of Aboriginal communities," A/ Prof at USYD Sarah Norris commented.

DHCRC's CEO Annette Schmiede said, "the success of the WACHS virtual care program to date demonstrates the demand across remote and regional Australia and through this project, remote health service providers will have an opportunity to inform and tailor future virtual healthcare solutions for the communities which they are serving". JG

PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT

Suppliers wanting to promote products in this feature should email newproducts@pharmacydaily.com.au

Pyridox – vitamin B6 supplement

Pyridox helps to relieve premenstrual symptoms such as cramps, breast tenderness, fluid retention, irritability and mood swings.

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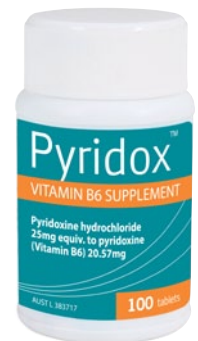
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