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Today's issue of PD

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

- Chemsave
- Direct Chemist Outlet

Chemsave savings

PHARMACISTS can save more than \$20,000 per year through major discounts via a new Chemsave member offer. The group is also offering a low membership fee. See more on **page three**.

Placement poverty

THE Health Services Union (HSU) is renewing its call for the Federal Government to extend paid placements to allied health professionals as a Senate committee on the issue scrutinises the *University Accord Bill*.

HSU also revealed a first hand account of hardship for a pharmacy student, Samuel, who said, "earlier this year I was assigned a four-week placement at a hospital in Sydney, four hours away".

"Unfortunately, I was told that accommodation is only available for rural placement.

"I had to stay at a hostel for the four weeks, which cost me just shy of \$2,000," he said.

"The interest rates increased while my wife was on maternity leave, and our mortgage went up to 55% of our combined income.

"I exhausted all our savings - four months later, we have not been able to replace any savings or catch up on our bills.

"The only reprieve is I will soon graduate," said Samuel.

Hackers hit on health data

THE healthcare industry has emerged as the most targeted sector for cyberattacks, according to the latest Notifiable Data Breaches report from the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC).

From Jan to Jun 2024, the OAIC received 527 data breach notifications, marking a 9% increase from the previous six months and the highest number since late 2020.

Of these breaches, 38% were due to cybersecurity incidents, highlighting vulnerabilities in an increasingly digital healthcare landscape in Australia.

One major breach affected over 10 million Australians, the largest recorded under the Notifiable Data Breach scheme, underscoring the critical need for better data protection measures in healthcare.

High-profile incidents, including the Monash Health breach via Zircodata and the sale of MediSecure's e-script data, have heightened public anxiety.

Research from AUCyber, as part of its *2024 Cyber Security Healthcare Report*, revealed that 82% of Australians are concerned about the safety of their health records.

AUCyber CEO Peter Maloney emphasised the urgency of addressing these risks.

"Our research shows that 71% of



Australians believe safeguarding healthcare data is primarily the responsibility of the federal government and healthcare institutions," said Maloney.

"The stakes are high, and it is crucial for these entities to act decisively to protect personal health information."

He added, "healthcare providers must bolster their defences and adopt comprehensive measures to safeguard against cyber threats".

"Protecting sensitive health information is not just a regulatory obligation but a crucial element of maintaining public trust."

The govt report's findings underscore the pressing need for stronger cybersecurity in the healthcare sector. JG

Pharmacy Board seeks a new applicant

THE Pharmacy Board of Australia is inviting applications for a practitioner member from the Australian Capital Territory.

The position aims to enhance a culturally safe health workforce that addresses the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and combats racism in healthcare.

The Board encourages First Nations candidates to apply, as well as applications from individuals with disabilities, those identifying as LGBTQIA, and people from culturally diverse backgrounds.

For more details on eligibility and the application process available on Ahpra's website, **CLICK HERE**.

PHA: super misuse

PRIVATE Healthcare Australia (PHA) is urging the government to restrict early access to superannuation, allowing it only for terminal and life-threatening conditions.

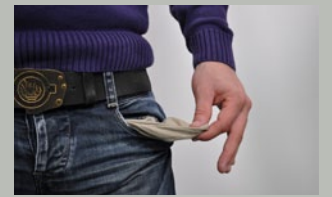
The call comes as tens of thousands of Australians are using their superannuation for medical and dental treatments, driving up healthcare costs for everyone.

PHA CEO Dr Rachel David highlighted that over the past five years, more than 142,000 Australians accessed their super early for healthcare, totalling \$730.5 million in 2022-23 alone.

"This trend is inflating prices, with surgeons and dentists charging more when they know patients have access to large sums," said Dr David.

She also warned that raiding superannuation now could leave people financially vulnerable in retirement.

PHA is advocating for a policy change to protect Australians' future savings and curb rising healthcare costs.



Gain more clout

FOR stronger brand recognition, Direct Chemist Outlet is encouraging pharmacy owners to switch brands to its banner to gain more buying power in today's competitive market.

See more on the **back page**.

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Dispensary Corner

IN A surprising twist for dads-to-be, researchers at The Florey have found that a father's gut health might be just as important as his dad jokes.

Apparently, it's not just mums who need to stay healthy for the sake of their offspring.

The Florey's Prof Anthony Hannan and his team have discovered that a dad's gut microbiota could influence the future health of his kids - at least in mice.

The team found that mouse offspring are affected by changes in their father's sperm caused by bacterial infections and virus-like challenges, as well as diet, exercise and stress.

"We've always heard that women need to take care of their health for their baby's sake," said Prof Hannan.

Well, dads-to-be, it turns out you need to step away from that extra slice of pizza too.

In the research trial, male mice were given antibiotics to mess with their gut bacteria, and the result was that their offspring ended up with smaller guts, lower body weight, and the females even showed some anxiety and depressive-like behaviours.

The study's first author, PhD student Bethany Masson added, "human gut microbiota function is similar to mice, so men's health, diet, and behaviour before conception may play an important role in the health of their children".

So, dads-to-be, maybe think twice before that second burger - your future kids might thank you.

Kids in pain need help now

IT IS Kids in Pain Week (23-29 Sep), and Chronic Pain Australia is raising awareness about the one in five children living with the difficult condition.

With only six paediatric pain clinics nationwide, many children face waiting times of up to three years for treatment, severely impacting their development.

Dr Joshua Pate, a researcher and pain scientist, underscored the issue, saying, "the latest data shows that there are roughly five kids in every class facing the challenges of chronic pain".

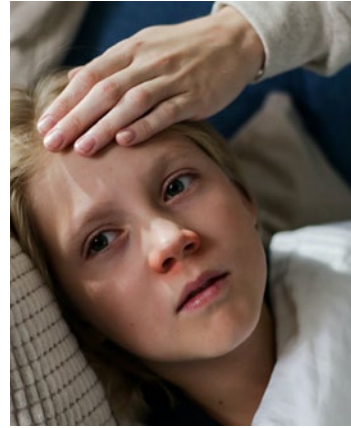
"And the school absence data is staggering: an average of 22%, that's about nine weeks of school missed per year."

Kids in Pain Week will feature expert webinars and a virtual event for families, offering resources, expert insights, and activities for children living with pain.

Chairperson of Chronic Pain Australia, Nicolette Ellis, said that children's pain has to be taken more seriously.

Many children face disbelief because chronic pain is often associated with older age and wear and tear, said Ellis.

However, children's pain is just as real and debilitating as adult pain, but it is complicated by communication challenges and



unique developmental needs.

Chronic Pain Australia stated it is working to dispel this misconception - pain affects all ages, and more must be done to support children.

"Just because children are smaller people doesn't mean their pain is any less," said Ellis.

She also highlighted the need for expanded paediatric pain services.

"This Kids in Pain Week, we are calling on governments and the community not to minimise chronic pain in our most vulnerable.

"Without timely diagnoses and treatment, chronic pain can disrupt children's schooling and play, leading to long-term developmental issues that persist into adulthood," commented Ellis. *JG*

Protein and folate from alternate sources

GERMAN researchers have harvested protein and vitamin B9 from microbes by feeding them nothing much more than hydrogen, oxygen, and CO2.

Published in *Trends in Biotechnology*, the study showed that the technology could help reduce carbon emissions from food production as it runs on

renewable energy to produce a sustainable, nutrient-rich protein alternative that may one day make it to our plates, they say.

The team designed a two-stage system that produces yeast rich in protein and vitamin B9, also known as folate, and essential for bodily functions.

To learn more, [CLICK HERE](#).



Guild Update

One week to go for vapes in pharmacies

FROM 01 Oct, vapes can legally be sold in pharmacies as a Schedule 3 product, in all Australian states and territories, except Tasmania.

The Guild has been clear that it does not support pharmacies being the only place where nicotine-containing vapes can legally be purchased.

Pharmacists are health professionals trained in the safe and quality use of meds.

A situation where we are asked to supply addictive and dangerous substances that aren't approved therapeutic goods is not one we can support.

Pharmacies can choose whether or not to stock vapes. For those who choose to stock them, it's important you and your staff understand the changes and how to best implement them.

If you choose not to supply vaping products, make sure customers and patients know before approaching the dispensary, to avoid disappointment.

Should you choose not to supply vapes, the Guild has put together some resources to help you communicate your decision to your patients.

Guild members can download files for printed signage for display in the pharmacy - [CLICK HERE](#).

Do The Math(s)!

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