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Guild Pharmacy of the Year finalists announced



THE Guild has announced the five finalists for the Guild Pharmacy of the Year 2025 Award, celebrating the outstanding contribution of pharmacies across the country.

All finalists have demonstrated exceptional innovation, a strong commitment to their local community and clinical excellence, the Guild said.

Located in remote Western

Australia in a town dominated by the mining sector, the team at Pharmacy Help (Karratha, WA, **pictured**) has risen to meet the unique challenges of its location, such as recruiting and retaining staff.

It has also innovated programs to improve health in the community, which includes FIFO workers; is deeply engaged with the local Indigenous community; and is

fostering a love of science in the town's children.

Capital Chemist (Charnwood, ACT) is known for going above and beyond in its service to the community.

The owners have made it their mission to ensure healthcare is accessible, compassionate, and innovative, offering specialised services, expanded scope of practices and services such as urgent home deliveries.

In a town with limited healthcare options, featuring only a small GP clinic and no supermarket, Berridale Pharmacy (Berridale, NSW) serves as a vital hub for essential services.

The trusted resource bridges the gap in healthcare access, ensuring that residents, especially those in geographically isolated areas, can receive the care they need.

Recognising the evolving healthcare needs of the area, the team at Warnbro Pharmacy (Warnbro, WA) has focused on offering a wider scope of services in collaboration with physicians and allied health professionals, leading the way in integrated holistic community care.

Since acquiring Complete Care Pharmacy (Rosny Park, Tasmania) in 2019, the team has focused on creating a more patient-friendly, environment, with private areas to provide personalised care from pharmacists and allied health professionals, such as diabetes educators and nurse practitioners.

Specialised services include on-site compounding, wound care, men's health services, IVF support and minor ailment care.

The winner will be revealed on 20 Mar at the APP2025 Conference.

Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features three pages of news.



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MCRI to deliver kids program

MURDOCH Children's Research Institute (MCRI) in Melbourne has partnered with Independent Pharmacies Australia (IPA), Pharma Programs and Prax Hub to launch their first online accredited pharmacy training program focused on children's health.

The new program will see pharmacists in Australia upskilled to provide advice to families on some of the biggest child health topics.

Currently available to pharmacists who are IPA network members, the program will open to the broader network of community pharmacists from late Mar.

The pilot currently offers training on childhood sleep, aiming to help parents tackle sleep problems, which affect one in three children.

If successful, the program will expand to other key health concerns, such as allergy and asthma, informed by MCRI experts.

MCRI's Professor Harriet Hiscock, who developed the sleep program, said pharmacists are highly trained, trusted and accessible and are well placed to triage, treat or refer patients to other professionals as required.

"We know that many families go to their community pharmacist for trusted health advice, but pharmacists don't always have much training in paediatric care," she said.

"We need to work together as doctors, pharmacists, nurses and allied health professionals to provide even better services to the community.

"This partnership will provide



more opportunities for families to access trusted health advice about their children when they need it most," she added.

After completing the sleep program, Professor Hiscock said pharmacists would be able to identify sleep cues and signs of obstructive sleep apnoea, and discuss management options for behavioural sleep problems.

She explained that over time, children's sleep duration has steadily declined, and sleep problems can range from failing to get enough sleep to waking up repeatedly during the night.

"Good sleep habits are essential to the health, wellbeing, learning and development of infants and children," Prof Hiscock said.

"Babies, children and teenagers need different amounts of sleep as they age and most adolescents do not get the recommended amount of sleep, which can contribute to mental health issues like depression and anxiety.

"Sleep restores children physically, boosts immunity and helps protect them from sickness.

"Children also produce growth hormones while asleep, so it's crucial for them to get enough sleep for their age." KB

WA Labor pledges ADHD role for GPs

SPECIALIST GPs will be able to diagnose attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and initiate and manage its treatment with stimulant medication under proposed WA Labor reforms.

Developed in collaboration with the Royal Australian College of GPs (RACGP), WA Labor has committed to implementing the initiative if returned to government at the state election on 08 Mar.

The proposal has been hailed as a breakthrough for patients.

Under the changes, patients will be able to receive a diagnosis and treatment from specialist GPs with a specific skills in ADHD and peer support from specialist paediatricians or psychiatrists.

Currently, patients must receive a diagnosis from a psychiatrist or paediatrician.

RACGP WA Chair and Vice President Dr Ramya Raman has welcomed the proposal, saying it is a step forward.

"This proposal is the culmination of extensive discussions and work by GPs and the WA Government, but more importantly, calls from

our patients for support to access potentially lifechanging treatment," she said.

"Patients need ongoing support for complex conditions like ADHD."

Dr Raman said the initiative will be a big step forward for Western Australians if implemented well.

"ADHD is estimated to cost Australians \$20 billion every year, including both direct health costs and more abstract factors, like its impacts on productivity," said Dr Raman.

"But we can't lose sight of the human side.

"It's stressful to manage a complex condition and it is important for patients to have all the support around them.

"Patients deserve ongoing access to care through their specialist GP, who knows them and their history, and this proposal can enable that for people living with ADHD," Dr Raman said.

An expanded role for GP assessment and support for people with ADHD received in-principle support in the Federal Government response to the National ADHD Inquiry held in 2023 (PD 16 Dec 2024).



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Dispensary Corner

WITH his US health secretaryship edging ever closer, concerns are being raised - again - about some of Robert F Kennedy Jr's weirder ideas about good health practices.

The latest to hit the headlines was his apparent ingestion of methylene blue.

To the non-aquarists among us, the medication is used primarily to treat parasites in fish, swim bladder disease, and other aquatic ailments.

And as one commentator clarified, RFK Jr is many things, but he is not a tropical fish.

It is also used legitimately in humans to treat a rare blood disorder called methemoglobinemia.

But health benefit claims extend further - curing jetlag, slowing ageing, boosting energy and metabolism, improving mental clarity and, according to Mel Gibson, curing cancer.

There's also some suggestion it can treat early-stage COVID, bringing to mind that other antiparasitic, ivermectin.

Proven effects include interacting with certain medicines and turning urine blue, while a variety of other uses are being investigated.

To be clear, no one actually knows for sure that the blue stuff RFK Jr was photographed dropping into his drink was methylene blue.

Is it perhaps a little unfair to assume that because he has lots of controversial ideas around medicine, that this is just another one?

As yet, he has not commented.

Equity challenges in obesity

THE use of glucagon-like peptide-1 receptor agonists (GLP-1 RAs) for the treatment of obesity has the potential to impact one-third of Australians, with implications for funding and models of care to ensure equitable access, wrote experts in the *Medical Journal of Australia*.

At the moment, only Wegovy (semaglutide) and Saxenda (liraglutide) are currently indicated for treating obesity, with Ozempic (semaglutide) used off label.

None are listed on the PBS for obesity, and multiple applications for listing from the manufacturers have been knocked back based on cost considerations and unknown long-term cost effectiveness.

"The Australian health system is an important test bed for how to strike a balance between addressing obesity-related health concerns, while maintaining the financial sustainability of health care systems given the uncertain health economics of GLP-1 RAs for obesity," wrote the authors.

"This represents a timely case study on how we design, develop and implement new models of health care service delivery to meet the changing care needs of the Australian population."

Obesity disproportionately affects people from low socioeconomic status groups, with 38% of those living in the lowest socioeconomic status areas affected, compared with 25% in the highest.

The medications are expensive, and may increase health inequity, the authors noted.

Bariatric surgery, an effective treatment for obesity, largely occurs in the private system, again disadvantaging those without means.

Long cost horizons have led to some health insurers in the US

abandoning GLP-1RAs for obesity.

However, the authors suggested, "if funded by insurers, GLP-1 RAs could provide an avenue for patients to engage in holistic wraparound weight management services rather than surgical options", adding that it should be offered as a hospital substitution option for selected high risk patients, rather than under "extras" (general treatment) cover.

If funded by the PBS, duration of subsidisation would be an issue, with overseas models generally limiting treatment to two years.

The authors also considered who should prescribe the medicines, with primary carers preferred over telehealth or specialists routes, offering continuity of care and supervision of its positive and potentially negative health effects.

Workforce education is critical, with community pharmacists having an integral role in educating patients about delivery and titration of GLP-1 RAs, they said.

You can read the full paper [HERE](#).

APP top tips

PHARMACISTS attending APP2025 are advised by APP Chairman Kos Sclavos to brush up on their knowledge of diagnostic devices, by tuning into the panel session, 'How community pharmacy can strengthen their primary care role through precision health'.

Featuring US-based pharmacist and National President of the National Community Pharmacists Association (NCPA) Jeff Harrell, the panel will showcase examples of diagnostic devices supporting pharmacists to play an enhanced role in primary care.

"As a global leader in community pharmacy, Jeff will bring invaluable insights into the challenges and opportunities shaping our industry," Sclavos said.

The session will take place on Thu 20 Mar, the first day of the conference.

Find out more [HERE](#).

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