

4 ways to help build strong bones



Available from Symbion, Sigma, API & CH2

Always read the label and follow the directions for use.

Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features three pages of industry news, plus a full page from **Pharmacium**.

Design your space

PHARMACIUM will create work spaces that reflect your working style and improve efficiencies throughout your pharmacy, with a focus on dispensary operations. For details see **page four**.

PBMs hike prices

THE three largest pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs) in the US have been accused of significantly marking up the prices of medications, including for heart disease, cancer and HIV.

According to a new report from the US Federal Trade Commission (FTC), UnitedHealth Group's Optum, CVS Health's CVS Caremark and Cigna's Express Scripts hiked up prices at their pharmacies by hundreds or thousands of per cent between 2017-2022, netting them US\$7.3 billion in revenue.

"The \$7.3 billion is the difference between what they are reimbursing themselves and what it is estimated to cost them to acquire the drug," an FTC spokesperson said.

Patient out-of-pocket costs for these drugs rose by 14-21% between 2017 and 2021.

Tennis star Dokic at APP



FORMER world champion tennis player Jelena Dokic has been announced a keynote speaker at the Australian Pharmacy Professional Conference and Trade Exhibition (APP2025) in Mar.

"We are incredibly honoured to have Jelena Dokic share her remarkable story at APP2025," enthused conference convenor, Kos Sclavos.

"Jelena's journey of resilience and triumph is a powerful testament to the strength of the human spirit and aligns beautifully with the values of courage and perseverance that we celebrate in the pharmacy profession," Sclavos said.

Dokic may be best known for her tennis prowess, reaching the Wimbledon semi-finals as a 17-year-old and being a double Grand Slam finalist at the age of 18.

However, she has also openly

shared her challenges with abuse and mental health in her two bestselling books, *Unbreakable* and *Fearless*.

During her presentation at APP, Dokic will reveal her transformative journey, inspiring attendees with the strength and resilience she needed to thrive in the face of adversity.

Her session is called 'Fearless - Finding the power to thrive'.

"Jelena's story is one of incredible determination and hope," added Sclavos.

"Her message of resilience will resonate with delegates and provide inspiration to tackle challenges both personally and professionally."

APP2025 will take place on the Gold Coast from 20-22 Mar, bringing together more than 7,000 attendees, 250+ exhibitors and 120+ speakers in a program of education and networking. *JHM*

Key advisor backs CHW-Sigma merger

PROXY advisory firm Ownership Matters has recommended that shareholders of Sigma Healthcare vote in favour of Chemist Warehouse's reverse takeover of the pharmaceutical company, citing significant shareholder value.

Sigma Healthcare will conduct a shareholder meeting on 29 Jan to seek approval for the deal, which will create a \$5.8 billion entity.

As part of the deal, Chemist Warehouse will buy Sigma for stock and \$700 million in cash, giving it a roughly 85% stake in the merged entity and a back door to list on the Australian Stock Exchange.

Sigma shares have surged more than 300% since the announcement of the deal.

Death from med IOU

A UK man suffered a fatal heart attack after his pharmacy ran out of his critical epilepsy medication and left him with a handwritten "IOU" note instead, sparking outrage and calls for a review of medical supply chains.

That was the second time the pharmacy ran out of the drug, leaving him without medicine for extended periods of time.

The earlier shortage of Tegretol resulted in the man falling, likely contributing to his deteriorating health.

minfos 

Accurately manage your dose administration aids with Minfos Packing

To find out more, talk to us today
help@minfos.com.au or 1300 887 418



Together we can®



Autism Strategy unveiled

THE Australian Government yesterday released a new National Autism Strategy, which sets out a seven-year vision for a safe and inclusive society that supports and empowers people living with autism, giving them the opportunity to thrive.

The strategy focuses on actions and enabling change in four key outcome areas: social inclusion; economic inclusion; diagnosis, services and supports; and health and mental health, via the National Roadmap to Improve the Health and Mental Health of Autistic People (Autism Health Roadmap).

The government has pledged \$42.3 million to implement the first stage of the strategy.

The strategy has been broadly welcomed by autism peak bodies and medical and community experts, with some caveats.

Clinical Psychology Professor Nicole Rinehart of Monash University hailed the bipartisan agreement to commit substantial funding to improve the lives of autistic children and their families, saying the strategy “marks an extraordinary leap forward”.

However, she cautioned that without collaboration across the clinical, research and community sectors, “we could lose the opportunity to make meaningful, world-leading progress for the autism community”.

The strategy acknowledges and seeks to address the structural barriers and hidden biases that have a negative impact on the life

National Autism Strategy 2025-2031



experiences of individual autistic people who face multiple and overlapping forms of disadvantage and discrimination.

This includes those with co-occurring medical and other conditions, with ADHD, anxiety, depression, migraine, metabolic syndrome, Crohn’s disease, Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome and Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome among the more common.

Monash’s Associate Professor and Clinical Psychologist David Moseley also welcomed the strategy, while “eagerly anticipating the release of the health and mental health strategy that will complement the National Autism Strategy”.

“Children and adults with complex and intersecting health, disability and mental health needs face profound disadvantages,” said Associate Professor Moseley.

“There is an urgent need for integrated, accessible and neuro-affirming support for this group.”

The health components of the strategy will be actioned through the Autism Health Roadmap, which has not yet been finalised. *KB*

Beyond BMI for measuring obesity



HEALTHCARE systems around the world should rethink the way they diagnose obesity, according to a group of international and Australian experts who say current approaches are too reliant on body mass index (BMI).

Published in the *Lancet Diabetes & Endocrinology*, the Global Commission on Clinical Obesity recommends a new approach focusing on other measures of body fat to avoid misclassification and its consequences.

The proposal is designed to address limitations in the traditional definition and diagnosis of obesity that hinder clinical practice and healthcare policies, resulting in individuals with obesity not receiving the care they need.

Rather than using BMI alone, the Commission recommends confirmation of excess fat mass (obesity) and its distribution around the body using a combination of body measurements, such as waist circumference, waist-to-hip ratio or waist-to-height ratio, with or without BMI; or direct body fat measurement (such as by a bone densitometry scan or DEXA).

In people with a BMI over 40, they say excess body fat can be pragmatically assumed.

The Commission also provides a new model for disease diagnosis in obesity based on objective measures of illness at the individual level.

It outlines 18 diagnostic criteria for clinical obesity in adults, including metabolic, respiratory and musculoskeletal symptoms, while pre-clinical obesity is defined as a condition of obesity with normal organ function but future risk.

“This nuanced approach to obesity will enable evidence-based and personalised approaches to prevention, management and treatment in adults and children living with obesity, allowing them to receive more appropriate care, proportional to their needs.

“This will also save healthcare resources by reducing the rate of overdiagnosis and unnecessary treatment,” said Commissioner Professor Louise Baur, of the University of Sydney.

The proposal has been endorsed by 75 medical organisations around the world. Read the full paper [HERE](#).



CONTACT NOVA on
1300 904 541 TODAY

NOVELLA-1

“YOUR CHOICE” FOR
EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTION

**SPECIAL
PHARMACY DEAL**

Available Now

N070125aS310. Ask your pharmacist about this product. Always read the label and follow the directions for use. For details on health warnings please see: <https://novapharm.com.au/products/novella-1-levonorgestrel-1-5mg/>





Dispensary Corner

PROVING to be Dispensary Corner's gift that keeps on giving, Novak Djokovic has hit the headlines again.

We're not talking tennis and the Australian Open, but rather his penchant for wild and wacky 'health' devices.

His latest wheeze is a magnetic 'energetic disc' that, to the rational being, looks like a green plastic frisbee with concentric lines on it.

But what would we know - after all, he's the one winning squillions playing tennis thanks to its magical benefits.

"It's (an) energetic disc, creates an electromagnetic field around it and (the) kind of secret is in this pattern," he explained in a video.

"And so when you place it on a certain part of your body...for example, if you have stomach issues, which I do have often when I'm nervous, stressed before the match or indigestion issues, that creates heat.

"So then it starts enhancing the metabolic functions or it reduces inflammation in certain part of the body."

He said the device was developed especially for him by a Serbian doctor-engineer, and he always has a bunch of them on hand.

"When I fly in the plane, I put it on (my) head or somewhere," he said, presenting an interesting mental picture.

"I shouldn't be having it on the body parts for too long, so like 20-30 minutes it does its work."

We eagerly await his next scientific breakthrough.

PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT

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

Alcon product discontinuation from January 2025

GenTeal Lubricant Eye Drops and **In A Wink® Lubricant Eye Drops** are no longer available via PBS subsidy (Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme) in Australia.

To help make the transition easier for those patients and practitioners currently using or prescribing the discontinued products, practitioners could recommend the PBS-listed lubricant **Systane® Original Lubricant Eye Drops**.

This has the benefit of being available in a similar delivery format and addresses the mucoaqueous layer of the tear film with HP Guar technology (*TFOS DEWS II Management and Therapy Report*).

Stockist: For details on orders, please contact Alcon Customer Service on 1800 224 153.

RRP: \$6.69

Website: Learn more [HERE](#).



Mag-Sup Powder - a better way to absorb magnesium

Mag-Sup powder is a high absorption magnesium supplement for use in magnesium deficiencies. It contains magnesium aspartate which has increased bioavailability compared to other forms of magnesium. Magnesium aspartate has better oral absorption than magnesium citrate, magnesium glycinate, magnesium chloride and magnesium oxide.

- High dose, once a day
- Rapidly absorbed
- Natural forest berry flavour
- Up to 300mg elemental magnesium per day
- Contains no artificial preservatives, colours or flavours

Available in 200g packs equivalent to 40 doses.

Supplier: Available from Symbion, Sigma, API & CH2. Contact your Clear Sales representative on 1800 640 043 for special deals.

RRP: \$21.57

Website: [CLICK HERE](#) for more information.





Transform your Pharmacy

Dream It | Design It | Make It Happen

We design spaces which reflect the way you work, and create efficiencies throughout your pharmacy with particular emphasis on dispensary operations.

We have a unique combination of hands-on pharmacy operations experience paired with hundreds of pharmacy design projects.

pharmacium.com.au
+613 9429 9244

find out how we can help

