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Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features three pages of all the latest industry news.

New boxed warning for montelukast

FOLLOWING similar moves internationally, additional safety information is being added to all montelukast products to strengthen and highlight existing warnings about serious neuropsychiatric events, the TGA has advised.

These include behavioural changes, depression and suicidal thoughts and behaviour.

The safety information includes a new boxed warning and additional guidance for prescribers and patients on the management of serious neuropsychiatric events.

Montelukast is used to prevent and treat chronic asthma in adults and children aged two years and older, and for symptomatic seasonal allergic rhinitis (hay fever).

The safety update follows a TGA investigation conducted in 2024 - see more [HERE](#).

New CSI for hospital pharm

THE Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) has announced its Hospital Pharmacy Practice Community of Specialty Interest (CSI), a new forum focused on strengthening support for pharmacists practising in hospitals.

Chaired by leading hospital pharmacist Professor Michael Dooley (pictured) and with an experienced team of hospital pharmacy leaders at the helm, the CSI addresses emerging practice needs through collaboration and knowledge sharing.

The CSI is dedicated to improving care in hospitals, including embedding pharmacists within healthcare teams, facilitating pharmacist prescribing within collaborative care models and improving pharmacist stewardship of medicine management to improve outcomes of transitions of care.

Hospital pharmacists now have access to a members-only Facebook group where they can connect with the CSI, with a dedicated online webinar to be hosted in early 2025.

On behalf of the PSA Board, National President Associate Professor Fei Sim welcomed and thanked Professor Michael Dooley



for leading this important work.

"The establishment of this CSI is a testament to PSA's ongoing commitment to all pharmacists as the peak body representing pharmacists across all areas of practice," Assoc Prof Sim said.

Alongside Professor Dooley on the leadership team are Choi-Ling Batten, Professor Ian Coombes, Lauren Fraser, Hannah Knowles, Associate Professor Sue Kirska, Richard Marotti, Professor Lisa Nissen, Associate Professor Bhavini Patel and Prasin Rodrigues.

"Every day in Australia there are over 24,000 presentations to emergency departments, 30,000 admissions into hospital and 100,000 patients receiving non-admitted care through hospitals.

"Pharmacists have a crucial role in the care of these patients especially as they transition between settings and services," Professor Dooley said.

"I am excited to be part of this great initiative and look forward to working alongside such an experienced team at the PSA to help inform and shape the future for hospital pharmacy practice."

Read more about the Hospital Pharmacy Practice CSI [HERE](#). *KB*

Vic measles alert

NEW cases of measles linked to travel in Vietnam have been reported in Victoria.

All Victorians are eligible to receive the free measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine if they were born during or after 1966 and do not have documentation of having received two vaccine doses.

People unsure of their vaccination status should also be vaccinated - see more [HERE](#).

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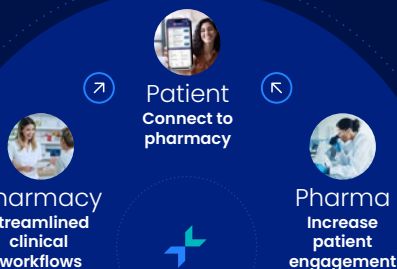
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Wesfarmers Health's bet on beauty "a smart move"

WESFARMERS Health has launched its first beauty and wellness standalone store, **Atomica**, capitalising on its learnings from the success of **Priceline**.

The pilot store at Castle Towers in Sydney was previously a **Priceline**, without a pharmacy offering, and is the first step in a planned expansion to other parts of Australia in 2025.

It retails viral brands such as **Bubble Skincare** and Korean beauty favourite **Innisfree**, along with established brands like **The Ordinary**, **La Roche-Posay**, **Clinique**, **Conserving Beauty**, **Hairification**, **e.l.f.** and **Milani**.

Atomica also has dedicated 'Glow Advisors' whose role is to assist customers with tailored beauty advice and in-store services.

Wesfarmers Health Retail Director Richard Pearson said: "We saw a gap in the market for an affordable and accessible beauty-focused retail proposition that delivers an inspirational in-store experience

with coveted international brands and locally-loved Australian brands".

Pearson said that sitting between high-end beauty specialist stores and a convenience grocery offer, the **Atomica** focus is on inclusivity and "inspiring customers with affordable ways to invest in their beauty and wellness".

Retail expert **Professor Gary Mortimer** told **Pharmacy Daily** "it's a smart move" by **Wesfarmers**.

"It is a very clever conglomerate of businesses and they have a history of leaning in and out of businesses or sectors that are doing well, then moving out when the sector doesn't look like it's going to grow or when there's too much competition," Prof **Mortimer** said.

"Moving into beauty is where **Wesfarmers** will see growth.

"Beauty, cosmetics and haircare have been pretty immune to cost-of-living crises, it's the classic 'lipstick effect', where despite times being tough, we want nail polish, we want a good skincare regime.



"That sector hasn't faltered, in fact, it boomed during COVID when we were at home and wanted to do something for ourselves."

Prof **Mortimer** noted that the **Sister Club** loyalty program has worked very well for **Priceline**, and **Wesfarmers** has integrated the program across **Atomica**, **Priceline** and **Priceline Pharmacy**.

"I think **Wesfarmers** has realised

something that pharmacists often don't - that the predominant element of a pharmacy is retail," Prof **Mortimer** said.

Chemist Warehouse launched its own beauty store, **Ultra Beauty**, which focuses on premium brands.

Starting out in 2018 as a shop-in-shop experience, **Ultra Beauty** has stores in **Victoria**, **NSW**, **Qld**, **ACT** and **SA**, as well as **New Zealand**. **KB**

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Dispensary Corner

A WOMAN has had her head tumour removed through her eye socket using keyhole surgery in a UK first.

Ruvimbo Kaviya, a 40-year-old nurse from Leeds, had a meningioma taken out from the space beneath her brain and behind her eyes.

According to Kaviya, the tumour was so painful it felt like "an electric shock" and sometimes made it difficult for her to do everyday activities like just brushing her teeth.

"It was the first time they were doing the procedure," she told the *BBC*.

"I had no option but to agree because the pain was just too much."

The operation took just three hours and Kaviya was able to walk home that day.

The nurse had double vision for three months after the operation, but afterwards, she returned to work and now has just a tiny scar by her eye.

In the past, this kind of tumour would have required brain surgery and involved taking a large part of the skull away.

"It's a hard-to-reach area, and this allows a direct access without any compromise of pressure on the brain," said neurosurgeon Asim Sheik.

"So it just reaches us in areas which were once thought to be inoperable, but now are accessible."

Thankfully, a model of Kaviya's skull was created ahead of the surgery, so the team could practice on it before the big day using 3D technology.

AZ solar-powering pharma



ASTRAZENECA has a new solar panel installation shading its rooftop car park at its Sydney head office and manufacturing complex.

The Macquarie Park development features 1,092 Trina Solar modules, generating approximately 911 MWh annually and enabling solar energy to meet 16% of the site's energy needs - all while shading cars from the hot summer sun.

The car shade project supports

AstraZeneca's Ambition Zero Carbon program and integrates four electric vehicle charging stations that are free for staff and visitors to use, further showcasing AstraZeneca's commitment to clean energy innovation.

The solar carpark rooftop was delivered by a partnership between Trina Solar, a global leader in smart PV and energy storage, and Smart Commercial Solar. *KB*

NAPSA Wildcard student of the year

THE Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) has proudly announced that Brielle Geard, from the University of Tasmania, is the 2025 NAPSA Wildcard Pharmacy Student of the Year.

The PSOTY competition showcases the top pharmacy students in Australia, celebrating their exceptional skills, knowledge, and dedication to the pharmacy profession.

The Wildcard category provides students who did not win their local competition another opportunity to compete and demonstrate their capabilities on a national stage at PSA25 in Aug. PSA National President

Associate Professor Fei Sim congratulated Geard on the achievement, saying it "highlights their potential as a future leader in the pharmacy profession".

"The Wildcard competition involved a rigorous assessment process, with participants judged on their ability to solve complex clinical scenarios while effectively communicating with patients and healthcare teams," Associate Professor Sim explained.

"Brielle stood out for their exceptional communication skills and knowledge."

Geard will now progress to the final round of the PSOTY competition at PSA25 in Sydney.



Guild Update

We're working Towards 2035

THE Guild is working hard to develop a new strategic plan to guide our members and the broader community pharmacy sector, 'Towards 2035'.

This comprehensive roadmap will address the rapid growth and transformation within the industry, helping us navigate the challenges and opportunities of the next decade.

By planning ahead, we aim to remain aligned with the evolving needs of our members and the communities we serve.

We are working toward a launch date of Jun 2025, and to achieve this, we are undertaking extensive consultation with Guild members.

Listening to our members is critical to getting this right.

We want to hear about your needs, the challenges you face, and what you want and need for the future.

This feedback will help us anticipate potential roadblocks and create a strategic plan that reflects our shared vision and goals.

Together, we can build a stronger, more resilient community pharmacy sector that thrives well into the future.

If you haven't yet completed our member survey, now is the time to have your say.

The survey closes at 11:59pm on Fri, 31 Jan, so don't miss the chance to contribute to this important process.

Learn more about Towards 2035 [HERE](#).