

Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features four pages of industry news, including our **Beauty & Wellness** feature.

TGA vape busts

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has issued a combined total of \$396,000 in infringement notices to 20 Melbourne retail businesses for the alleged unlawful supply of vaping goods.

This resulted from a Dec 2024 joint activity with the Victorian Department of Health.

Each business was given a \$19,800 infringement notice.

Over 7 million vaping products have been seized since 01 Jan 2024, and in the second half of 2024, the TGA issued 54 infringement notices to businesses and individuals for allegedly advertising, supplying, possessing or importing unlawful vapes.

Shortages impact on pharmacists' wellbeing

MEDICINE shortages are having a palpable impact on Australian pharmacists, with more than nine in 10 reporting frequent delays in patient treatment due to low stock.

A national survey undertaken by University of South Australia (UniSA) researchers found that medicine shortages are increasing patient stress as well as pharmacists' workloads, with almost 90% being forced to source medicines from non-regular wholesalers at least weekly.

While the survey was undertaken in late 2023, medicine shortages remain an ongoing issue.

There are 419 medicines currently affected, particularly those relating to weight loss, ADHD, cholesterol and hormone patches, and supplies for 61 of them expected to be impacted in the next few months and years.

"Medicine shortages not only place an operational strain on pharmacists, but also create ethical dilemmas," UniSA lecturer in

pharmacy, Dr Jack Janetzki said.

"Pharmacists must navigate between ensuring equitable access and maintaining regulatory compliance, often with limited resources," he explained.

When facing restrictions, pharmacists have limited options, Dr Janetzki said.

"They can contact the doctor asking them to prescribe an alternative medicine, approach different wholesalers other than their regular suppliers, or refer the patient to a different pharmacy, hoping they can help them, he said, adding "it's not an ideal situation".

A different dosage or medicine strength can only be substituted by contacting the doctor or if it is listed on the TGA's Serious Scarcity Substitution Instrument (SSI) list.

More than 90% of Australian medicines are imported, which particularly affected supplies during the COVID pandemic, but Dr Janetzki said manufacturing medicines locally is not an easy

option to improve supplies because of the high costs of medicine production in Australia.

There are processes that could be trialled to address the shortages.

"Maintaining an inventory of medicines across all pharmacies would minimise impacts on customers, because staff could quickly identify where medicines are available rather than having to call nearby pharmacies to determine whether they have them on hand," Dr Janetzki said.

"The TGA currently requires drug companies to notify them of expected medicine shortages six months in advance, but it would also help if there was anticipatory approval of overseas medicines for critical medicines.

"This would minimise the time people need to wait to access their medicines during a shortage of medicines registered in Australia."

The research was published in *Journal of Pharmacy Practice and Research* - read the paper **HERE**.

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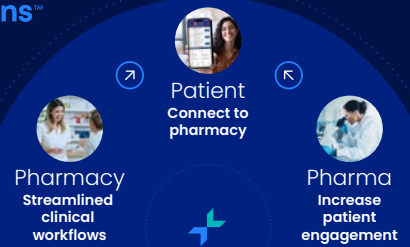
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GLP-1RA risks and benefits in diabetes

A **LARGE** study investigating the links between glucagon-like peptide 1 receptor agonists (GLP-1RAs) and a wide range of health outcomes has found a decreased risk for 42 health outcomes and an increased risk of 19.

GLP-1RAs - semaglutide, liraglutide and tirzepatide - have gained popularity in the past several years due to their weight-loss benefits, and are also being researched for conditions such as Alzheimer's disease, osteoarthritis (*PD* 17 Jan) and sleep apnoea.

However, some cases of adverse events, such as suicidal ideation and gastrointestinal issues (including nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea), have also been reported.

The current study was based on analyses of data from the US Department of Veterans Affairs, and compared over 200,000 people with diabetes taking GLP-1RAs with over two million people with diabetes using other anti-hyperglycaemic medication.

They found that participants who used GLP-1RAs had a lower risk of coagulation and cardiometabolic disorders (such as deep vein thrombosis, pulmonary embolism, stroke, cardiac arrest, heart failure and myocardial infarction).

The authors also found evidence of new potential beneficial effects beyond those currently recognised, including associations with a lower risk of substance use disorders, psychotic disorders,



neurocognitive disorders (including Alzheimer's disease and dementia), seizures, bacterial infections and pneumonia.

However, GLP-1RA use was also associated with an increased risk of gastrointestinal conditions, such as nausea and vomiting, diverticulitis, gastritis and abdominal pain, as well as hypotension, syncope and musculoskeletal pain.

There was no increased risk of depression or suicide.

It should be noted that for non-diabetics taking GLP-1RAs for other reasons - most likely reducing body weight - the results of this study may not be applicable as the interaction of diabetes-related inflammation may be the reason for such wide-ranging effects.

The authors noted that their findings are observational and do not demonstrate causality, and need to be confirmed in cohort studies and clinical trials.

They also suggested that future studies should include more diverse cohorts, as data from the US Department of Veterans Affairs are predominantly from older, white men.

The study was published in *Nature Medicine* - read it [HERE](#).

Surf champ to make waves

CONFERENCE Convenor Kos Sclavos has announced that seven-time world surfing champion and motivational powerhouse Layne Beachley (**pictured**) will deliver an inspiring session, 'Unlocking a Winning Mindset', at the Australian Pharmacy Professional Conference and Trade Exhibition (APP2025).

Her session will take place on Thu 20 Mar at 4.50pm and will be immediately followed by the welcome reception, which officially opens Australia's largest pharmacy trade exhibition.

"We are thrilled to welcome Layne Beachley to APP2025," Sclavos said.

"Layne's extraordinary achievements, combined with her candid reflections on overcoming challenges, make her an incredible source of inspiration for our delegates," he said, adding that her session is "sure to leave a lasting impact" on delegates.

Beachley is celebrated for her resilience and determination.

Overcoming challenges such as adoption, mental illness, life-threatening injuries, and setbacks, Beachley turned adversity into opportunity, cementing her legacy both in and out of the surf.

Beyond her record-breaking achievements, she is a passionate advocate for equality, mental wellness, and sustainability.

As Chair of Surfing Australia and founder of Awake Academy, Beachley's mission is to empower lives through connection, confidence and self-care, making her an inspirational leader on and off the waves.



In her session, Beachley will share practical strategies for breaking through self-limiting beliefs, boosting energy, and achieving lasting success.

Delegates will learn her five-step self-care plan to prevent burnout, build resilience, and empower themselves to "win the morning to win the day".

Attendees will leave with actionable tools to elevate their wellbeing and unlock their potential in both their personal and professional lives.

"Layne's journey of resilience and determination resonates deeply with the pharmacy profession," Sclavos said.

"Her actionable insights and infectious energy will inspire attendees to overcome challenges, focus on wellbeing, and strive for excellence," he added.

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. *KB*

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L’Oreal bolsters K-Beauty portfolio with acquisition of Dr.G

L’OREAL Groupe has recently signed an agreement with Swiss retail group Migros to acquire well-known Korean skincare brand, Dr G, which was founded by dermatologist Dr Gun Young Ahn in 2003.

Dr G is known for its ingredient-led skincare range, such as its best-selling R.E.D Blemish Clear Soothing Cream.

According to a statement from L’Oreal, the brand consistently ranks among the top three mass market and dermacosmetic skincare brands in the country.

“Created by a dermatologist and offering high-performing solutions suitable for even the most sensitive skins, Dr.G

perfectly complements our existing skincare portfolio,” Alexis Perakis-Valat, Global President of L’Oreal’s Consumer Products Division said.

“We have been following the brand and its success for many years and we look forward to accelerating its growth in South Korea and the rest of the world, staying true to our mission to democratise and premiumise beauty by bringing the best of Korean skincare to consumers everywhere.”

Thanks in part to the rise of South Korean pop culture,



Korean beauty (also known as K-Beauty) has been on the rise in the Western world in recent years, known for its effectiveness, innovation and affordability.

According to the Business Research Company, the K-beauty global market will grow to \$16.15 billion in 2029.

New products new shades



1000HOUR is introducing new additions to its iconic range of lash & brow dyes, tints and mascaras, as well as hair mascaras.

Lash & Brow Serum (RRP \$19.99) strengthens, reduces lash fallout, and encourages natural growth, leaving lashes and brows looking longer and fuller within 30 days.

Brow Styling Wax (RRP \$14.99) helps achieve flawless lifted and sculpted brows that last all day.

The Microblading Pen (RRP \$11.99) is designed for control and accuracy, creating hairlike strokes for natural-looking brows that last.

The 3-in-1 Brow Pencil (RRP \$19.99) is an all-in-one tool that features a precision tip pencil, brow powder and clear setting gel in a single compact design.

The Dual Ended Brow Brush (RRP \$9.99) helps to fill in sparse areas using the angled tip brush for precise application, while sculpting and shaping with the spoolie.

The brand is also responding to consumer demand by expanding its range to include more shades, ensuring everyone can enjoy the convenience of salon-quality beauty at home.

Learn more about the range at: 1000hour.com.au/all-products.

DIY nail sticker kits

VIRAL DIY gel nail brand By Me & Crew has expanded its range of starter packs to keep up with increased demand, according to founder Pamela Yip.

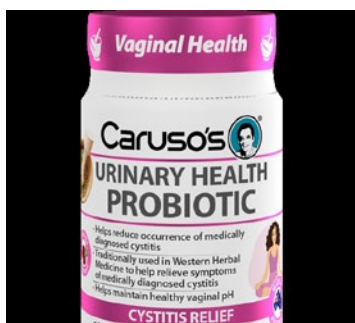
Now, customers can choose from two new packs: Gentle Pastels or Pink Glazed Donuts.

Each pack (RRP \$39.99) includes a UV light, gel nail sticker sheet, nail file, wooden stick and alcohol pad.

By Me & Crew is now available at Amcal, Priceline, and independent pharmacies around Australia.



Caruso’s new vaginal health probiotic range



CARUSO’S Natural Health has launched three new products with a focus on vaginal health.

Caruso’s Urinary Health Probiotic has been specially formulated to help support urinary tract health by assisting in the maintenance of healthy vaginal pH and supporting vaginal healthy microflora.

The formulation contains three

essential Lactobacillus probiotic strains and cranberry extract.

Caruso’s Vaginal Care Probiotic contains probiotics naturally present in the vaginal microbiome to help support the growth of good bacteria, inhibit the growth of harmful bacteria and maintain healthy vaginal pH.

During menopause, lower oestrogen levels disrupt the vaginal microbiome, allowing harmful bacteria and yeast to thrive.

Caruso’s Menopause Probiotic features three essential Lactobacillus strains to support a balanced vaginal microflora and help maintain a healthy vaginal pH, as well as black cohosh to help relieve menopause symptoms.

Learn more at carusosnaturalhealth.com.au.

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Beauty & Wellness
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Dispensary Corner

IT SEEMS that in addition to offering a traditional turndown service, delicious chocolates on pillows, mini shampoo bottles and tiny expensive bottles of booze and containers of Pringles, hotels have upped their game and entered the health and wellness era.

A new Four Seasons Hotel in Singapore has just opened, featuring a clinic from Chi Longevity, which is known for its "evidence-based approach to slowing biological ageing and optimising health".

Four Seasons Hotel guests can also receive tailored health assessments that incorporate diagnostic tools such as blood tests, cognitive testing and genetic profiling.

"Through a combination of genetic testing, blood panels, continuous glucose monitoring, and psychosocial assessments, we can identify and address age-related health risks long before they manifest," explained Professor Andrea Maier, founder of Chi Longevity.

"Unlike traditional healthcare, which often focuses on treating symptoms, our aim is to repair cellular damage, optimise organ function, and enhance both mental and physical agility."

In addition, the Four Seasons' culinary team has worked with Chi Longevity's dietitians to develop a curated menu at one of the hotel's dining venues.

These dishes combine the "artistic flair" of Four Seasons chefs with the science of nutrition, all designed to support guests' overall wellbeing.

New tests help cut antibiotic overuse

RESEARCHERS at Deakin University are leading trials of two new tests for bacterial infection that have the potential to significantly reduce the overuse of antibiotics prescribed to treat common respiratory illnesses.

The trials, which took place in Geelong GP clinics last year, involved a simple finger prick or throat swab that provided immediate results about whether a patient's infection is bacterial, and requires antibiotics, or viral, and different treatment is needed.

"The finger prick test has been trialled internationally, but we don't have the data needed to show its effectiveness and cost-effectiveness in reducing antibiotic overprescription in Australia," said Dr Sajal Saha from the Centre for Innovation in Infectious Disease and Immunology Research (CIIDIR). "It is a simple, low-cost test and early results show it can reduce antibiotic use by up to 30%."

The second test currently being trialled in five GP clinics across Geelong is a throat swab that

enables doctors to confirm within minutes whether a sore throat is caused by Strep A bacteria.

"Strep A is a common cause of throat infection and doctors prescribe antibiotics in around 70% of cases.

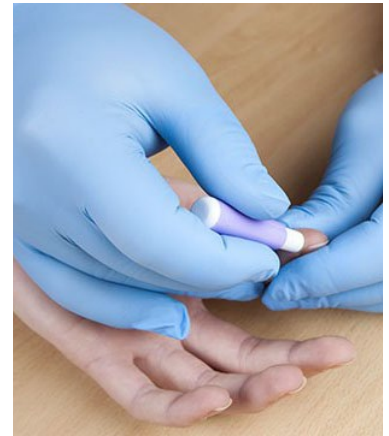
"But Strep A is only responsible for around 15 to 20 percent of sore throats, so the level of overprescription is very high," Dr Saha said.

"In children, Strep A can lead to rheumatic heart conditions so it is absolutely vital that it is properly diagnosed and treated early and effectively before it develops into a more serious illness.

"This throat swab test will ensure optimal antibiotic treatment."

CIIDIR Co-Director, Professor Eugene Athan, said both trials had potential to significantly improve the safe use of antibiotics, pointing out that Australia is one of the highest antibiotic prescribing countries in the developed world.

The unnecessary use of antibiotics - whether taking them when not needed, for longer than required



or in an incorrect dose - can lead to antimicrobial resistance (AMR).

"AMR is the cause of death for 700,000 people worldwide each year," Prof Athan said.

"Compared to national guideline recommendations, antimicrobials continue to be overprescribed in Australia, with 30 to 50% of prescriptions in primary care inappropriate either in choice, dose or duration," he pointed out.

A larger study of the two tests will be conducted this year. *KB*

Medical cannabis staff to mount Kosciuszko for rare cancers

EMPLOYEES from Montu, Australia's largest healthtech business with a focus on medical cannabis, will summit Mount Kosciuszko to raise critical funds and awareness for those impacted by rare, less common, and complex cancers on 15 Mar.

"At Montu, we believe in walking the talk," said Jodie Thomas, Montu's Vice President of Patient Advocacy and Corporate Affairs.

"Joining the Kosi Challenge is a tangible way for us to show our solidarity with people facing extraordinary health challenges.

"Every step we take symbolises our commitment to innovation, hope, and a brighter future for those impacted by rare cancers."

Rare cancers account for one in four cancer diagnoses in Australia, contributing to over half of all cancer deaths, but often lack the funding and attention dedicated to more common cancers.

The Kosi Challenge, organised by Rare Cancers Australia, is an annual event that invites participants to climb Mount Kosciuszko, Australia's highest peak, in support of patients and



families affected by rare and less common cancers.

Since starting in 2013, the Kosi Challenge has raised millions of dollars for vital research, advocacy efforts and support services for those living with rare cancers.