

Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features two pages of news, plus a full page from TerryWhite Chemmart.

TWC class of '25

OVER 600 pharmacists and pharmacy professionals attended the recent TerryWhite Chemmart Masterclass, a national pharmacist education program focused on advancing leadership, clinical practice and community care.

TWC congratulates the class of 2025 - see [page three](#).

MM2025 travel scholarships

ADVANCED Pharmacy Australia (AdPha) has announced four exclusive travel scholarships to support attendance at Medicines Management 2025 (MM2025) in Melbourne from 27-29 Nov.

The scholarships are valued at up to \$1,500 each, and comprise:

- the AdPha MM2025 First Nations Practitioner Scholarship, for a current AdPha member who identifies as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person;
 - the AdPha MM2025 Rural and Remote Scholarship, for a member living and working in a rural or remote area of Australia (MMM category 4, 5, 6 or 7);
 - the AdPha MM2025 Sustainability Scholarship, for a member who has shown exceptional commitment to advancing sustainability through local action, advocacy or initiatives;
 - the ANZCAP MM2025 Early Career Pharmacist Scholarship, for a member with active 2025/26 ANZCAP Pharmacist Resident or Pharmacist Registrar recognition.
- Applications close 07 Aug - learn more [HERE](#).

TGA warning after counterfeits seized

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has warned health professionals and consumers of the dangers of counterfeit medications, with highly convincing packaging making it difficult to discern from the genuine product.

The warning comes after the TGA facilitated the seizure of millions of counterfeit and illegal therapeutic goods as part of a worldwide initiative in conjunction with international criminal police organisation Interpol.

Australia recorded the largest seizures globally, with psychostimulants such as modafinil and armodafinil being the most common category seized nationally, followed by nicotine pouches and erectile dysfunction medicines.

"During this operation, the TGA assessed over 9,500 imports referred by the Australian Border Force and facilitated the seizure of over 5.2 million units of unlawfully imported therapeutic goods, including substandard and falsified products," said Professor Anthony Lawler, Deputy Secretary of the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing and head of the TGA.

"Buying medicines online from overseas may seem like a convenient or affordable option, but it can result in the consumer receiving counterfeit or substandard products that are ineffective or harmful.

"These products may contain the wrong dose of active ingredient, toxic contaminants or undisclosed

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dangerous or illegal ingredients."

Other counterfeit products seized included semaglutide medicines, ivermectin tablets, and injectable botulinum toxin products.

The TGA noted that the counterfeit botulinum toxin products were packaged to appear as genuine, branded, Botox products, manufactured by Allergan, an AbbVie company.

However, packaging inconsistencies were identified, including typographic errors like incorrect spacing, bolding and spelling mistakes.

Additionally, the batch numbers were confirmed by AbbVie as not genuine.

The products may pose a serious risk to health and should not be used, the TGA warned.

The regulator reiterated that the counterfeit 'Botox' products were purchased online from an overseas website and imported - they were not obtained from an Australian pharmacy.

"While consumers who hold a valid prescription may lawfully import prescription-only medicines for personal use, counterfeit products cannot be imported under the Personal Importation Scheme, under any circumstances, even with a valid prescription," a TGA spokesperson said.

"Knowingly importing, supplying and/or giving away counterfeit therapeutic goods is illegal and poses a significant public health



and safety risk."

The problem facing consumers is that manufacturers of counterfeit goods are producing products that, to the untrained eye, may appear legitimate - the two 'Botox' examples being case in point.

"We advise consumers to exercise extreme caution when purchasing medicines from unknown overseas websites," the spokesperson said.

The regulator recommended consumers consult their healthcare provider or local pharmacy if they have any concerns. *KB*

Pharmx renews diabetes agreement

PHARMX Technologies has confirmed the renewal of its long-standing agreement with the National Diabetes Services Scheme (NDSS), with a 12-month extension commencing 01 Jul.

"NDSS ordering remains one the most frequent and operationally embedded digital workflows in Australian pharmacies," a Pharmx spokesperson stated.

"Its continued integration with the Pharmx network affirms the platform's relevance to

core pharmacy operations and national health service delivery."

The company also reported that it has secured partnerships with over 50 new suppliers across Australia and NZ, including Homart and Healthylife, bringing the total number of active suppliers on the platform to 170.

Pharmx stated that the NDSS renewal and ongoing expansion of its supplier base "strengthen its leadership as the region's most connected pharmacy ordering network".

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Dispensary Corner

KIDS with type 1 diabetes (T1D) can now see themselves fashionably reflected in play.

In collaboration with diabetes research and advocacy organisation Breakthrough T1D, Mattel has released a new Barbie with T1D.

Sporting an insulin pump, continuous glucose monitor and a handbag to hold essential supplies, the aim of the doll is to expand representation and foster a greater sense of inclusion and empathy.

Barbie also wears a stylish polka dot top and matching skirt with ruffles, with the colour blue and circle print a nod to the global symbols that represent diabetes awareness.

"Introducing a Barbie doll with type 1 diabetes marks an important step in our commitment to inclusivity and representation," said Krista Berger, Senior Vice President of Barbie and Global Head of Dolls. "Barbie helps shape children's early perceptions of the world, and by reflecting medical conditions like T1D, we ensure more kids can see themselves in the stories they imagine and the dolls they love."

She is available at Big W, Kmart, Target and online stores.



What to expect for the rest of the flu season

THE 2025 flu season is now in full swing, and with case numbers high and vaccination rates concerningly low (**PD** 07 May), experts have outlined what we might expect from the rest of the season.

As the COVID pandemic fades from the collective memory, many Australians now think of influenza as the more serious of the winter respiratory viruses, said Associate Professor Joel Rhee, Head of Discipline of General Practice at UNSW Sydney.

However, the national data tell a different story.

"When I ask medical students, 'what do you think is more serious - influenza or COVID?' almost 100% say influenza," A/Prof Rhee said.

"But the statistics say otherwise - COVID is still causing more deaths than flu."

The most serious impacts of COVID, including hospitalisation and death, affect mostly older adults and those with chronic health conditions.

A/Prof Rhee sees the impact firsthand through his work in aged care homes, and while COVID does not seem to be a serious disease in young children, the flu can affect all age groups, including infants.

In 2024, children under nine years old had the highest rates of flu.

Vaccination remains the first and most effective line of protection, and A/Prof Rhee said it is not too late to get a flu shot this season.

Vaccine recommendations for COVID have evolved post-pandemic, with most people unlikely to benefit.

"We're no longer recommending an annual booster for most healthy people," A/Prof Rhee said, although those who are caring for vulnerable relatives might consider one.

"But those over 65 or with underlying health conditions may

need annual or more frequent boosters," he noted.

While some antiviral medications can help when started soon after infection, those hit by a flu-like virus can expect a rough ride - and a potentially long one.

Professor Andrew Lloyd, an infectious disease physician at the Kirby Institute, who also leads the UNSW Fatigue Clinic, pointed out that while a flu can wipe people out for a week, for many, it is just the beginning.

"Lingering symptoms like fatigue, brain fog and sleep disruption can persist for weeks, sometimes months," Prof Lloyd said.

These symptoms are typical for what is now termed 'long COVID', but Prof Lloyd's research shows they are not unique to COVID.

These symptoms also follow glandular fever, Ross River virus and Q fever, with data showing 30% of people with these infections still experiencing symptoms three months later.

And while the symptoms from



the acute infections were very different, the lingering symptoms were remarkably similar.

"Long COVID has drawn attention to these post-viral fatigue syndromes - but they've always existed," Prof Lloyd said.

Most people do get better with time, and "careful, structured rehabilitation - not just rest - is the best path forward", he advised.

The good news is that the severity and duration of long COVID may be decreasing, experts say, partly due to different strains of the virus, and also vaccination and prior infection improving immune response. *KB*

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 **TerryWhite Chemmart**