

## Award review secures pay increases

**PHARMACISTS** covered by the Pharmacy Industry Award could see their pay increase by up to 18% over the coming months following a Fair Work Commission (FWC) ruling.

Employee pharmacists and pharmacy assistants will receive their pay rise by 5.5% from 01 Jul through a combination of the 3% National Wage increase, and a 2.5% bump in the Award.

The Commission has also mandated a further 2.5% increase to the Award from 01 Oct.

The decision to split the rollout of the 5% Award increase into two separate increments was made “to mitigate their effect on businesses”.

Pharmacists who undertake home medicine reviews (HMRs) and residential medication management reviews (RMMRs), will receive an extra 10% pay boost.

Professional Pharmacists Australia CEO, Chris Walton, said



the increases coincided with the union’s growth.

“When you add that to more than 6% across the past two consecutive National Wage increases, pharmacists have seen an unprecedented 21% bump in pay,” he said.

“Its no coincidence that the pharmacy sector is now the most

heavily unionised that it has ever been...for the past three years, pharmacists have got organised through their union and fought against the odds – and against the Pharmacy Guild of Australia – and this is what happens when you get organised.”

In a message to members, the Guild said the increases to HMR and RMMR allowances will amount to an additional \$106.40 per week, for eligible pharmacists effective from 01 Oct.

“The Guild is analysing the impact of these decisions and more details will be sent to members next week,” the message said.

“The Guild is also updating wage sheets and members will be advised when these are available,” the update added.

### Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today has three pages of news plus a full page from PriceSave powered by Sigma Healthcare.

### New-look PD

**WELCOME** to your new-style **Pharmacy Daily (PD)** edition, filled with news and the usual features each day, but easier to read, a little brighter and more colourful - we hope you like it.

### UNITED CHEMISTS

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A fantastic opportunity has now become available for a dedicated Pharmacist in Charge to join our business. This is a full-time role based at our United Chemists Undergrove in the Mackay Region. This is a really exciting position, placing the pharmacist front and centre in our pharmacy to make an even greater impact on our customers' health outcomes. This role is focused around proactive engagement with our customers and being directly accessible to provide trusted advice and recommendations.

**How To Apply:**  
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\*New from Ego Pharmaceuticals.

References: 1. Australian Medicines Handbook (online). Dermatological drugs. Tables. Comparison of potency and uses of topical corticosteroids [Internet]. 2018 [cited 2018 July 25]. 2. Dermatology Expert Group. Therapeutic Guidelines: Dermatology, version 4. Dermatitis: Atopic dermatitis. Therapeutic Guidelines Ltd [Internet]. 2018 [cited 2018 July 25]. 3. Kloxema Cream Approved Product Information, 12 September 2017.

Before recommending please review full Product Information [here](#).

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## End MBS exclusion: PSA

**PHARMACIST** delivered health interventions should be included on the Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) to increase the role the profession plays in addressing the healthcare needs of Australians, the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) believes.

In a submission to the MBS Review Taskforce, the PSA stated “pharmacists must be involved in the care of patients whenever medicines are part of their health management plan, and particularly in the context of chronic disease”.

PSA National President, Chris Freeman (pictured), said that while the Allied Health Reference Group advocated that pharmacists should play a greater role in patient care, in Feb (PD 08 Feb), more action needed to be taken to unlock the potential of the profession.

“Pharmacists have been calling for access to the MBS to reflect their skills, training and experience for longer than many of us can remember,” he said.

“While this recommendation now exists, it is focused on long-term implementation.

“Given the rate of medicine-related harm being experienced by Australians and the potential for pharmacists to contribute to medicine safety and quality use of medicines, it is critical that the implementation of this recommendation is not delayed.”

The PSA noted that pharmacists have a critical role to play within allied healthcare teams in improving medication adherence, particularly in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, with pharmacists positioned to provide tailored solutions to meet the specific needs of individual patients.



for the Mental Health Reference Group’s recommendations calling for a coordinated strategy to provide support for patients with chronic and mental illnesses and access to mental health services in residential aged care.

The Society also voiced its support

for the Mental Health Reference Group’s recommendations calling for a coordinated strategy to provide support for patients with chronic and mental illnesses and access to mental health services in residential aged care.

### TGA charge deadlines

**THE** Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has alerted sponsors of Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods (ARTG)-listed products to forthcoming deadlines to cancel ARTG listings to avoid incurring automatic 2019-2020 annual charges.

Deadline dates are defined on the website at [tga.gov.au](http://tga.gov.au).

### Pharmacy value

**COMMUNITY** pharmacies have helped cancer survivors to lose weight, lower their cholesterol and improve their strength by providing accessible lifestyle interventions, a phase II feasibility study published in *BMJ Open* has found.

The study involved 116 men undergoing pharmacy interventions including a personalised risk assessment comprising clinical history, cardiovascular risk, strength, fitness, physical activity and diet.

Go to [bmjopen.bmj.com](http://bmjopen.bmj.com).

### Althea milestone

**AUSTRALIAN-LISTED** medicinal cannabis company Althea has announced it has achieved its first 1,000-patient milestone five months ahead of schedule.

A total of 185 healthcare professionals have now prescribed Althea medicinal cannabis with more than 11 new patients being added per business day, including 227 additional patients in May.



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## Guardian Angels knit cosy



Beaconsfield Pharmacy Guardian Angels

**GUARDIAN** Pharmacy has celebrated the success of the first month of this year’s Knitting for Good 2019 campaign, with a “significant rise in pharmacy participation and involvement”.

Now in its 21st year, Guardian Pharmacy’s Guardian Angel knitting program has during its lifetime provided more than two million knitted garments for those facing hardship each winter.

Continuing their successful partnership with St Vincent de Paul Society (Vinnies), the campaign calls on crafty Australians to put their knitting skills to good use in a bid to provide each of the 116,000 Australians experiencing homelessness with some warm

winter wear.

The support pack for the campaign has encouraged the highest ever engagement rate, with pharmacists reporting local knitters asking to participate long before campaign commencement.

Retail GM, Brian Tomlin, said his team was proud to continue the partnership with Vinnies and be part of a wider initiative that continues to help those in need.

“The continuing partnership with Vinnies has taught us homelessness doesn’t discriminate – it affects people of all ages and backgrounds, so we’re proud to be part of communities who come together and support those who need it most,” Tomlin said.

**CLICK HERE** for more details.

## Win with John Plunkett

Everyday this week Pharmacy Daily and Plunkett’s are giving away the John Plunkett Dark Spot Eraser and Facial Cleanser.

John Plunkett Dark Spot Eraser is a concentrated serum with Eventone Complex™ – a blend of multiple actives to visibly lighten dark spots and boost your skin’s health and radiance, plus it’s easy to incorporate into your daily skincare routine with guaranteed results. RRP \$39.95. Visit: [www.JohnPlunkett.com.au](http://www.JohnPlunkett.com.au) for more.



To win, be the first from NSW or ACT to send the correct answer to the question to [comp@pharmacydaily.com.au](mailto:comp@pharmacydaily.com.au)

What is Eventone Complex™?

Check here tomorrow for today’s winner.



## Dispensary Corner

**RESEARCHERS** from the University of the Sunshine Coast have identified a syndrome called "text neck" which has seen a rise in a curious spiky growth on the back of some people's skulls.

The "external occipital protuberance" can be found just above the neck, and was thought to be extremely rare until recently.

However, health scientist David Shahar from the University of the Sunshine Coast in Queensland has analysed more than 1,000 skull x-rays and found it's becoming much more common particularly among people aged 18-30.

Shahar hypothesises the increase is due to people leaning over their smartphones, with the hunched posture creating additional pressure which leads the body to lay down fresh layers of bone.

**THE** complexity of legalising recreational cannabis has been highlighted in a recent US court decision which has found that it is OK for prison inmates to be in possession of marijuana - just as long as they don't inhale.

The California ruling confirmed that having less than one ounce of cannabis in prison is "no longer a felony".

However "smoking or ingesting cannabis in prison remains a felony," the judgement added, with the case overturning the conviction of five prisoners who had been found with marijuana in their jail cells.

## Leuprorelin alert

**THE** European Medicines Agency has started a review of leuprorelin medicines, after reports indicated that handling errors during administration can cause some patients to receive insufficient doses.

## Probiotics "no coke 'n' fries"

**COMPANION** selling probiotics with prescription medicines is "no coke 'n' fries" add-on, but a strong evidence-based health intervention that pharmacists can provide to support their patients, according to former Pharmacy Guild of Australia National President, Kos Sclavos.

Speaking at an industry media lunch hosted by Metagenics, Sclavos said pharmacy owners needed to ensure their staff were equipped to "speak with confidence" about the use of specific probiotic strains with different prescription medications.

Sclavos described the \$172 million probiotic sector as a "clean category" for pharmacy, offering rapid growth, and opportunities for the profession to boost health outcomes, while also showing strong dollar-share and growth.

However, he said pharmacists needed to understand the value and potential of probiotics, both in terms of patient benefit and financially for their businesses, to get the most out of the category.

"I run the two biggest congresses in pharmacy and we spend a lot of money getting speakers who are going to talk about strains of microbiome and strains of probiotics, and what's the right product to use, but there's still a massive education piece [to be done]," he said.

Sclavos noted the frequent use of probiotics in southern European countries, where "the pharmacist naturally gets a probiotic and puts it on the counter", when patients come in for a prescription antibiotic.

"They think gut flora is important and they've understood it for centuries," he said.

"The evidence is so strong for probiotics."

Sclavos also urged pharmacists to consider dual-locating probiotic stocks, so they can have them close-by when dispensing prescriptions and can easily recommend a suitable product without having to leave the dispensary.

## Pharmacies have a lot to gain from IT

**PHARMACY** owners are being urged to embrace technology to optimise their businesses.

Announcing that the Pharmacy Guild of Australia has become an industry association member of the Government's Small Business Digital Champions Project, Guild National President, George Tambassis, said pharmacies could gain a lot from greater utilisation of technology in their businesses.

"We are committed to helping our members transition to technology and to make the best use of available systems," he said.

"We are proud to be a part

of the Small Business Digital Champions Project and see this as just one way we can help our members grow and maintain sustainability for their businesses."

Under the Digital Champions Project, 100 small businesses will be selected to undergo "comprehensive digital transformations", supported by experienced mentors.

A 2017 report highlighted the value of being digitally engaged, with IT savvy small businesses recording greater revenue and service growth.



## Weekly Comment

Welcome to Pharmacy Daily's weekly comment feature. This week's contributor is **Nicole Hooley**, Merchandise and Retail Operations Manager at instigo.



## Merchandising by Numbers

**ALL** businesses need to analyse data to assess sales patterns and trends in order to highlight gaps or potential opportunities. When it comes to effective pharmacy merchandising strategies the old adage is true - if you can't measure it, you can't manage it. It is easy to look around your pharmacy and estimate what your key categories are. However, looks can be deceiving, and sales trends change over time; 'traditional' key categories may become less so, especially when a simple return on space sales comparison is undertaken.

Data is critical when it comes to identifying what is happening in your pharmacy. The ability to run accurate reports from your point of sale system can assist in determining the primary reason customers are coming into your store and what other products they are also purchasing. Dedicating time to review your store data assists with determining when to run instore promotions, product selection and timings for display, customer communication and staff training.

A well-managed front of shop can help offset profitability challenges, recognising that carrying the right products, in the right places, with the right pricing and promotions (such as a loyalty program), along with staff discussing the health benefits to customers - drives follow-through at shelf and this remains a critical factor in ease of shopping for the customer.

Regular reviews of your pharmacy data are essential to a healthy pharmacy business!



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