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Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features three pages of news, plus full pages from:

- Pharmacium
- Nova Pharmaceuticals

Nova campaign

NOVA Pharmaceuticals is launching a three-month radio campaign to promote its Elactalyte electrolyte range on Nova 96.9.

See page five for more.

BodyPlus support

SPORTS tape brand, BodyPlus, is donating 50 cents to the National Breast Cancer Foundation (NBCF) for every roll of its Pink Tape Rigid and Kinesiology pre-cut products sold, to support Breast Cancer Awareness month this Oct, and raise funds for research.

Defunding NPS 'a backwards step'

MOVES to defund NPS MedicineWise announced by the Coalition Government as part of its pre-election Budget measures will go ahead (PD 05 Apr).

Following a review of the Budget proposal, Federal Minister for Health and Aged Care, Mark Butler (PD 19 May), has backed the decision to proceed with the redesign of the Quality Use of Therapeutics, Diagnostics and Pathology (QUTDP) Program (PD Breaking News).

Confirmation that the organisation will no longer receive Federal funding from 01 Jan 2023, has prompted the NPS MedicineWise Board to announce it will be wound up on 31 Dec.

NPS MedicineWise CEO, Katherine Burchfield, said the decision marked "the end of an era".

"Over the years, NPS MedicineWise has become a valued 'go to' resource for health professionals and consumers in the quality use of medicines,

and has built up a unique set of expertise, assets and networks," she said.

"It is hard not to see this decision as a backwards step."

In a statement released this morning the organisation noted that over the last 24 years it has delivered a net return on investment of more than 2:1 to the Federal Government in direct savings for the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme and the Medicare Benefits Scheme.

NPS MedicineWise Chair, Dr Andrew Knight, said the decision left the Board with no choice but to close the company when the funding cuts come into effect.

"NPS MedicineWise does not agree with the decision to proceed with the redesign," he said.

"We believe it will prove to be a poor decision, and will make the safe and wise use of medicines in Australia much harder to achieve.

"However, we accept that this is the Minister's decision and, in



response, have made the difficult decision to wind up the company as and when our funding ceases on 31 Dec.

"NPS MedicineWise has made an outstanding contribution to the quality use of medicines over its 24 years and has improved the lives of many Australians."

NPS MedicineWise said that it would focus on the "responsible transfer of its functions" over the coming months and see to ensure the best outcomes for staff.

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Paracetamol scheduling under review

CONCERNS about the appropriateness of the current scheduling of paracetamol has prompted the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) to launch a public consultation about proposed amendments to the Poisons Standard.

The decision to seek feedback on the scheduling of the molecule stemmed from "available data on paracetamol poisoning, including intentional overdose, and associated hospitalisations and deaths".

Proposed changes include "the prohibition of display and self-selection of paracetamol in general [non-pharmacy] retail outlets", to discourage "impulsive purchasing" of products by vulnerable people; reducing the maximum pack sizes of unscheduled and S2 products; or restricting the number of packets patients can buy, to reduce "home stockpiles".

Other options being considered by the TGA include making modified release products Prescription-Only

"to reduce inappropriate use of this product, which is harder to treat in overdose than immediate release paracetamol"; requiring paracetamol tablets and capsules to be packed in blister packs, which make it "slower to consume" as they must be individually ejected from the blisters; and limiting the purchasing of over-the-counter analgesics to people aged 18 years and older, a move that "would be expected to reduce poisonings among 10 to 17-year-olds".

Speaking at the Pharmacy Industry Roadshow in Sydney last week, Pharmacy Guild of Australia National President, Trent Twomey, noted that the Guild had opposed the original decision to down-schedule paracetamol.

"I went and dug up the Guild's submission that we did to oppose the down-scheduling of paracetamol... and it said that 'it will be used as a drug of abuse by young women who are having suicide attempts,'" he said.



"Then the next molecule - ibuprofen - 'will result in an increase in gastric bleeds'.

"There is now a post-market review on both of those molecules by the Australian Committee on Medication Scheduling, because funnily enough both those things are happening."

The closing date for submissions relating to the consultation process will be 14 Oct.

[CLICK HERE](#) for more.

PA Conference countdown

DELEGATES planning to attend the Pharmacy Assistant (PA) National Conference in Brisbane next month are being urged to book their travel and accommodation with just six weeks to go.

Returning after a two-year COVID-19-induced hiatus, the conference will provide PAs with access to face-to-face learning and the opportunity to boost their product knowledge at the event's trade exhibition.

The conference will also see the announcement of the 2022 PA of the Year Award winner.



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Dispensary Corner



US PHARMACIST, Clint Hopkins, is taking the provision of vaccination outreach services to a new level.

In an effort to combat the spread of monkeypox in Sacramento, Hopkins and his husband, Joel Hockman, have broken out of the four walls of their pharmacy with their team of immunisers, to vaccinate the local LGBTQ community where they are.

The process has seen the team provide monkeypox shots in bars, at private parties and at their local LGBTQ centre, *Time* reported.

"We're in a bit of a unique situation, because we're LGBT and part of the community that is at highest risk," Hockman said.

"We're aware of social events that are going on through our social network, so we reached out and said, 'Hey, we know you're going to get together - let us come and vaccinate everybody while they're there.'"

Hopkins said that the strategy of going out to the community had ensured people who might not have accessed vaccination services, were reached.



Colloquium commits to students

PHARMACY and nursing organisations have committed to preparing students to be not just work-ready, but to drive change in primary care.

Following the 2022 Interprofessional Colloquium conference in Sydney last week, the Australian Pharmacy Council (APC), the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Accreditation Council (ANMAC), the Council of Pharmacy Schools of Australia and New Zealand (CPS), and the Council of Deans of Nursing and Midwifery (CDNM) issued a joint statement emphasising the importance of empowering students to deliver future focused primary healthcare.

CPS President, Professor Debra Rowett, said "the modernised health system will be more integrated, efficient, focused on

patients and equitable".

"Healthcare is delivered not just in hospitals, or in any single site," she said.

"Our students are going to need to inform this healthcare landscape.

"[They will need to be] not only work-ready, but be ready to change it, to learn from the pandemic and take forward new approaches that truly deliver patient-centred care."

APC CEO, Bronwyn Clark, said the Colloquium program had highlighted how critical students are in mitigating risks and lessening the effects of continuing global issues.

"We believe that when you give students the right tools and give them the confidence and reassurance that they hold the power to create change, then they will want to be disruptors," she said.

"And they will feel confident to



make real change.

"But for them to have that mindset, it's up to us as educators to plant those seeds to future-proof our professions."

CDNM President, Professor Karen Strickland, said there was a need for change, noting "if we keep doing the same thing, and looking at the same solutions, we're going to keep getting the same answers".

HEALTH & BEAUTY

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