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Today's issue of PD

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

- WholeLife Pharmacy
- Willach
- Glucojel

Scope to grow

WHOLELIFE Pharmacy & Healthfoods is offering five key differences between it and other traditional pharmacy-only models, all backed by a highly-experienced team.

See more on **page four**.

Explore solutions

WILLACH is a trusted partner in pharmacy having delivered over 1,000 dispensary solutions to improve medication management and reduce errors.

See more on **page five**.

Butler confirms but offers to reinvest

TODAY, Federal Health Minister Mark Butler confirmed that the 60-days' dispensing measure will commence on 01 Sep, with savings for general patients up to \$180 a year, and concession card holders up to \$43.80 a year per medicine.

Butler said at least six million Australians will halve their medicine costs and need fewer visits to the GP and pharmacist to get the medicine they use the most, saving patients more than \$1.6b over the next four years.

"While eligible Australians will be able to buy double the medicine on a single script, overall demand for medicines will remain unchanged.

"This reform won't affect medicine availability and it won't add to shortages," Butler asserted.

"This reform delivers important cost of living relief to Australians, and every dollar saved by the Government will be reinvested straight back into community pharmacies to secure the ongoing strength of the sector and ensure



our trusted pharmacists play an even larger role in the healthcare of Aussies," he reassured pharmacists.

Further, the Govt is investing \$350m in community pharmacy outreach into aged care facilities.

Butler also said the government would continue to push back against the medical lobby groups and support expanding pharmacists' scope of practice.

"Australian pharmacies already do much more than just dispense medicine and the government is supporting our trusted pharmacists to play an even bigger role in the healthcare of Australians," he said.

Once fully implemented, the 60-day prescribing policy will

provide doctors with the option to prescribe a two-month supply of more than 320 medicines on the PBS to people with stable, ongoing conditions such as heart disease, cholesterol, Crohn's disease and hypertension.

The new policy will be staged with government departments monitoring its progress.

Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) President Dr Nicole Higgins told ABC today that pharmacists were being "alarmist" about the policy is though "today's announcement is just the beginning".

"The RACGP also supports further investigation of the benefits to patients in changing the \$1 discount rule.

"We also want an overhaul of Australia's anti-competitive pharmacy ownership and location laws, which inflate costs for patients, and appear focused on protecting pharmacy owners," Higgins concluded.

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Rail stations' offer

THE UK's WH Smith will roll out a "one-stop-shop format" to eight branches in "major" rail locations following the success of the format introduced in its London Euston branch last year, as well as in London Gatwick and London Heathrow airports, *C+D* has reported.

Well Pharmacy announced in Dec 2021 that it had partnered with the retailer to offer pharmacy products alongside news, books and convenience products at the London train station.

A WH Smith spokesperson said that extending the ranges it stocks into categories such as "pharmacy products", health and beauty, tech and food to-go will enable it to "provide time-pressed customers with all their travel essentials under one roof with a fast and convenient shopping experience".

The move will also deliver "good returns with improved margins and attractive economics" for its landlords, it added.

The spokesperson told *C+D* that the branches will be at London main line stations such as Victoria, Waterloo and Liverpool Street.

Andrew Harrison, WH Smith Travel Managing Director, said these new stores will offer like at the Euston store "the best in convenience retail with a one-stop shop solution for passengers on their journey through the station".

Blue to make wishes true

THE entire team of Blooms The Chemist will 'Wear It Blue To Make Wishes Come True' from today, to raise funds and awareness for the Make-A-Wish Australia kids' charity in the days leading up to World Wish Day on 29 Apr.

As it closes in on \$1.7m raised in donations, the group will also today be a 'Matched Giving Partner' where it will match every dollar raised by Make-A-Wish Australia up to a total of \$15,000.

In addition, stores will be hosting 'Wear It Blue To Make Wishes Come True' morning teas across its national network, selling baked goods and encouraging customers to join in their donation efforts.

CEO Emmanuel Vavoulas said, "since our partnership began in 2016, we've taken every opportunity to support the charity and encourage not only our staff but our partners, suppliers and customers to join us in our fundraising efforts."

"Our pharmacies offer exceptional healthcare services and expert care in their local communities, but they also connect with our customers and collectively come together



to support important charitable causes like this."

The money raised through activities like 'Matched-Giving' is fundamental to helping grant the wishes of the over 900 critically ill children currently on their Wish Journey, including the wish of six-year-old Manny (pictured) who was diagnosed with Wilms' tumour.

Manny's wish is to visit a Magical Lane where the butterflies and fairies live for a big fairy adventure.

Marie, Manny's mum, said, "the wish lets Manny know that she is so special, and for everything that she went through, this is what she gets at the end," Marie said.

Dismiss J&J bankruptcy filing urged

CANCER victims this week urged a US judge to dismiss a Johnson & Johnson subsidiary's second bankruptcy filing, saying the company is abusing the bankruptcy system in its renewed attempt to resolve tens of thousands of lawsuits alleging that J&J's baby powder and other

talc products caused cancer, which the company has denied.

Plaintiffs have filed more than 38,000 lawsuits that have been consolidated in federal court in New Jersey alleging that J&J talc products sometimes contained asbestos and caused ovarian cancer or mesothelioma.

\$50m for PASC

THE Federal Govt will provide a further \$50m from the Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF) for research into post-acute sequelae of COVID-19 (PASC) - commonly known as Long COVID.

This is in addition to funding that has already been provided for research related to Long COVID, including more than \$13m from the MRFF, \$1.6m from the National Health and Medical Research Council, and \$5m from the Australian Partnership for Preparedness Research on Infectious Disease Emergencies.

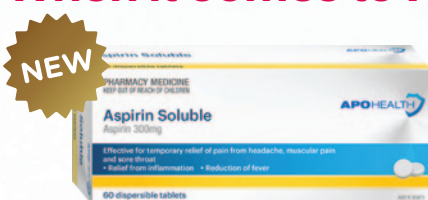
The Dept of Health spokesperson said this new funding will help improve knowledge of Long COVID in the Australian context and generate evidence to inform policy and clinical guidance, improve health outcomes, and increase awareness of the condition in the community.

The first grant opportunity is expected to open in Aug.

The funding comes as the final report from the House Standing Committee on Health, Aged Care and Sport's Inquiry into Long COVID and Repeated COVID Infections was tabled in the Australian Parliament this week.

The committee, chaired by Dr Mike Freeland, made a number of recommendations in its final report, which was informed by more than 560 submissions and testimonies from a wide range of sources.

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Dispensary Corner

NOBODY likes getting into a hot car, and a doctor in India has come up with a unique solution which he says makes summer life much more comfortable.

Dr Sushil Sagar, who is apparently a homeopathic physician based at Khurai Civil Hospital in Madhya Pradesh, has posted images of his vehicle (pictured) plastered in cow dung, explaining his approach to local news agency ANI.

"It often happens in summer that the sheet on top of the car draws heat and increases the temperature inside the car," the ingenious inventor noted.

"By applying cow dung coating, the inside temperature of the car does not rise...the heat that is felt while sitting inside the car during summer is avoided with this," he said.

The genius idea also means vehicle air conditioning works better and faster, Sagar added, claiming that the cow dung coating can last as long as two months if it doesn't rain.

It's unclear whether cow dung could be similarly applied as a human sunscreen, but PD earnestly hopes he's doing some clinical trials at the moment to test out the idea.



Off-label misuse is leading to deaths

THE off-label misuse of a prescribed antispasmodic baclofen has claimed the lives of more than 30 patients in the past decade, the Victorian Coroner Audrey Jamieson reported in *AusDoctor* today.

Jamieson was investigating the death of a 64-year-old this month from overdosing when she ordered the Coroners Prevention Unit to review baclofen overdose data.

AusDoc said the data uncovered 34 deaths in Victoria from 2012 to 2021, including 17 deaths of patients with a history of alcohol use disorder, with the "vast majority" of all deaths a result of intentional self-harm.

The source of baclofen, when it was identifiable, was most often scripts to manage alcohol cravings, Jamieson said.

"The PI [product information],

however, contains a warning that baclofen taken in combination with alcohol increases the risk of respiratory depression and sedation, and therefore, it should be used with caution where patients have a history of alcoholism."

The woman was found dead at her home in Apr 2020.

Police found glasses of red wine with a "cloudy colour/layer" and two bowls: one with tablets and the other with powder residue.

Toxicological analysis revealed baclofen levels of about 5.5mg/L.

Jamieson said the patient had received two scripts for 100 tablets of baclofen 10mg in Jan 2019 from a general physician at a private hospital.

The patient filled both scripts at once in Aug 2019, suggesting a plan

to stockpile the drug, but Jamieson said there was no way of telling whether the tablets in the overdose were from the two scripts.

The Coroner said guidelines warned baclofen was not a first-line treatment for alcohol disorders and "should be prescribed with caution" yet "may be considered in specialist settings".

She called for the TGA to extend baclofen's indication to include alcohol use disorder so doctors had guidance on how it should be used.

"In my view, the weight of the available evidence indicates that a TGA-approved model could reduce the risk of a misguided subjective assessment by an individual clinician of his patient in prescribing baclofen," she said, adding there may be other more appropriate and effective measures as well.

PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT

Suppliers wanting to promote products in this feature should email newproducts@pharmacydaily.com.au

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WHAT MAKES WHOLELIFE **UNIQUE?**

For the pharmacy owner considering *different* brand approaches, there are five key differences between WholeLife and traditional pharmacy-only models.

1



MORE CARE, MORE VISITS

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2



EXPANDED RANGE, FULLER BASKETS

Because WholeLife offers a complete range of prescription services, alternative and natural health products, a wide range of affordable health foods and local products, customers spend more per visit.

3



ONE-STOP HEALTH DESTINATION

Customers can be confident they will get balanced advice on new natural health regimes and preventative treatments – backed by knowledge, research and a professional understanding of contra-indications and combinations to avoid.

4



A SENSE OF COMMUNITY

Stocking local products and foodstuffs, providing learning events and linking with allied health professionals brings people together – making your pharmacy a community wellness destination.

5



SCOPE FOR GROWTH

As your WholeLife pharmacy establishes its reputation, there is scope to add new revenue from products and services where your customers and community expect to find them – from wellness books and mindfulness hobbies to tasting events and advice on sustainable living.



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