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Symbion is the leading independent choice for pharmacies. We wholeheartedly support the Pharmacy Guild of Australia's position on location and ownership rules and believe in an industry free from large scale corporate ownership. We have the experience and solutions to help you reach your goals.

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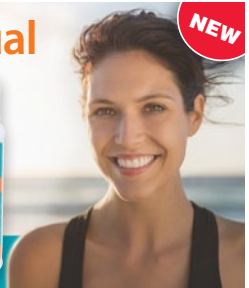
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Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features three pages of pharmacy news plus a cover wrap from Symbion, as well as full pages from:

- BioCeuticals
- Glucojel

Trusted partner

SYMBION is the choice for independent pharmacies and supports the profession being free from large corporates.

See more on the **cover page**.

Meeting needs

BIOCEUTICALS has launched its UltraMuscleze + Pain Relief which contains magnesium to support muscle health.

See more on **page four**.

Increases footfall

GLUCOJEL, the original jellybean, is more sought after by pharmacy customers and helps increase foot traffic instore - see more on **page five**.

Fits the purpose

THE Federal Govt wants to ensure youth mental health service, headspace, is fit-for-purpose, appropriately resourced and well-integrated with other services.

The mental health of young people is declining, with almost 40% experiencing a mental disorder in the past 12 months, almost double the rate of mental ill health in the general population, the gov't stated.

The Gov't's Evaluation of the National headspace Program concluded that headspace provides comprehensive and complete services to address the mental health needs of young people, as well as making recommendations to improve this flagship service.

Pharmacist and Assistant Minister Emma McBride said, "headspace is central to Australia's youth mental health service system and this investment gives us the opportunity to build on some of the great work happening across the network".

Broaden PBS dispensing

THE Pharmacy Guild Qld branch President Chris Owen is calling on the Gov't to broaden continued dispensing arrangements to include all PBS-subsidised medicines for residents impacted by the current disaster in Far North Queensland.

"As medicines experts, patients should be able to access all PBS subsidised medicines from their local community pharmacist during a disaster, and we are calling on the Albanese Gov't to expand the list of medicines available under the National Health (Continued Dispensing) Determination 2022 to include all PBS-subsidised medicines for patients in the North," said Owen (**pictured**).

He explained that patients who do not have access to their prescriptions or medicines in the natural disaster, and can safely access their local community pharmacy, should talk to their pharmacists about accessing emergency supply arrangements.

"Medicines eligible to be supplied under the current Federal arrangement are too narrow and should include all medicines.

"We are also calling on Minister Fentiman to support the call to the



Australian Gov't so that pharmacies can dispense all PBS-subsidised medicines to those patients who are in need."

Owen commented that while the vast majority of pharmacies remain open, some with minimal staff, it is vital that patients can access healthcare and their medicines from their community pharmacist now and over the coming weeks.

"We will continue to work with Queensland Health to reinforce the importance of medicine availability and supply chain viability to communities impacted by natural disasters in all future planning," Owen concluded. *JG*

Dukoral shortage to continue into 2024

PHARMA company CSL Seqirus has issued a statement that Dukoral (oral inactivated cholera vaccine) is in short supply, and will soon be out of stock in both single and twin pack presentations.

Wholesalers or travel clinics may have some residual supply in the market for a period.

Due to a disruption in supply from CSL's international partner, Dukoral is expected to be unavailable through to Jun 2024.

Cholera cases have continued to surge this year which has resulted in high demand for the vaccine in those priority disease outbreak areas.

Travellers to cholera-endemic areas should seek advice from travel health clinics to assess their personal risk and apply

precautionary sanitary and hygiene measures to prevent infection, the company stated.

Such measures can include drinking bottled water or water treated with chlorine, carefully washing fruit and vegetables with bottled or chlorinated water before consumption, regularly washing hands with soap, eating thoroughly cooked food and avoiding consumption of raw seafood products.

According to the World Health Organization, vaccination should be considered for travellers at higher risk, such as emergency and relief workers who are likely to be directly exposed.

CSL has said it will continue to work with its supplier to access Dukoral for Australia at the earliest opportunity.

PSA Vic winners

THE Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) has announced the recipients of its 2023 Victorian Annual Excellence Awards, presented to pharmacists who are making outstanding contributions to the profession and the health of their communities.

The Victorian Pharmacist Medal was awarded to Natalie Kopas, an independent community pharmacist from Tucker Road Pharmacy in Bentleigh, Vic.

Director of Monash University's Centre for Medicine Use and Safety Prof Simon Bell is the Pharmacist of the Year for pioneering the role of pharmacists in residential aged care.

The Lifetime Achievement Award went to A/Prof Louis Roller for a career spanning 60 years including holding several academic and leadership roles.

Emily Griffin was awarded the Early Career Pharmacist of the Year for her many achievements including co-building and developing the Australian-first Voluntary Assisted Dying Statewide Pharmacy Service in Vic, leading to the successful implementation of the service.

The Intern Pharmacist of the Year went to Joshua Cooper from Priceline Pharmacy Maryborough for becoming an integral part of the rural pharmacy team.

PSA Vic President Dr Amy Page congratulated the award winners, recognising their commitment to pharmacy practice and the public.

"Each and every pharmacist recognised last night has made a significant contribution to the profession over the last year and throughout their careers and I congratulate them all on this worthy recognition," Page said.

"Congratulations to the award winners and nominees for your commitment to the health of all Victorians."

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Opioids use in pain

RESEARCHERS examining the data on opioids for pain caused by cancer have found surprisingly large gaps in evidence regarding the true benefits of these medicines for cancer pain.

The review challenges the commonly held view that opioids are the most powerful pain relievers.

The University of Sydney-led review highlights there is no 'one size fits all' treatment approach for cancer pain, urging healthcare professionals and patients to carefully weigh up the evidence when deciding on a suitable pain management plan.

Opioid pain relievers are the most common treatment for cancer pain management.

However, the study found very few trials have compared commonly used opioid medicines such as morphine, oxycodone and methadone with placebo.

The study did not find convincing evidence that morphine was better or safer than other opioid medicines for background cancer pain outside of end-of-life care.

This is despite morphine being widely viewed as the 'gold standard treatment' for cancer care.

The review also found that non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs including aspirin and diclofenac may be as effective as some opioids for background cancer pain.

Narrabri a one-stop shop



THE Guild Pharmacy of the Year (POTY) finalist for 2024, Narrabri Pharmacy, NSW, is highlighting several of its services as it remains open as a central rural health hub over the festive season (PD 14 Dec).

In doing so it's promoting COVID boosters and other services which people might not know they can access at a pharmacy.

Narrabri Pharmacy proprietor and pharmacist Karen Carter told *The Courier*, "new XBB-1 COVID boosters are in store, as cases are around, now is the time to get your booster shots up-to-date for the Christmas period, so top up and protect yourself and your family".

Demonstrating why the store is in the running for the POTY awards next year, it is offering a range of services such as travel vaccinations for those heading overseas, with generally no scripts necessary.

A sleep apnoea screening service and the machines and masks are available, Carter explained.

The pharmacy is also providing its

customers with a delivery service.

A wound care service is available for minor burns, skin tears, and general wound advice.

Additionally, Narrabri Pharmacy is taking part in the NSW urinary tract infection (UTI) trial, allowing the pharmacy to treat women aged 18 to 65 years who present with UTI symptoms, and dispense antibiotics without a doctor's prescription.

The pharmacy is also taking part in the NSW oral contraception trial where women aged between 18 and 35 years can purchase their contraceptive pill of choice without a prescription.

Carter thanked her customers, saying, "we look forward to helping with your health in 2024, and we all wish you a happy and healthy Christmas and New Year". JG

The Narrabri Pharmacy team are pictured from left: Kirra Natty, owner Carter, Kelly Smith, Alexis Holland, Katie Seymour, Emily Nott, Sarah Freeman, Tammy McCauley and Anna Anderson.

RARE hotline

AROUND two million Australians diagnosed with a rare or complex health condition can now call a dedicated helpline that provides vital information and support that fits their needs.

The Rare Awareness Rare Education (RARE) Helpline is fully operational and staffed by qualified personnel from Rare Voices Australia (RVA).

The helpline has been operating in an interim capacity since Jul and has already received calls from people in every state and territory, providing advice and information on more than 45 different diseases.

The hotline's staff can answer questions and can provide information about particular diseases, advice for people seeking a diagnosis, contact details for support organisations and clinical centres, and emotional support.

The helpline was established with a \$2.5 million govt grant.

RVA CEO Nicole Millis said, "the great complexity, unmet need and uncertainty in rare and complex diseases can be incredibly overwhelming".

"The RARE Helpline provides timely access to information and answers key questions for people living with rare and complex diseases for whom there is no specific patient support group."

The RARE helpline can be accessed by calling 0499 549 629 or by visiting [HERE](#).

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year

From Business Publishing Group





Dispensary Corner

SPACE has become anything but the final frontier, particularly after Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos, one of the richest people in the world, shared his vision of what it would be like if millions of people lived in space colonies. Bezos described an idyllic life aboard his future space colonies, each of which could have its own theme and function. Some would resemble historic cities, while others could be space farms, interplanetary wilderness areas or a variety of other options. "And you could have a recreational one that keeps zero G so you can go flying with your own wings," he remarked. Despite the hype, Bezos' presentation was met with sharp criticism. Public reaction was that he could easily be describing future office parks, captive-labour towns in space. But people within the space-enthusiast community were thrilled, reported NBC News. Al Globus, a former NASA contractor and Co-Director of the National Space Society, had a one-word reaction: "Fantastic". "These colonies are very large structures, miles on end, and they hold a million people or more each," Bezos explained. Space taxis could carry visitors from colony to colony in a day or less, and heavy industry would be moved off Earth "to preserve this unique gem of a planet", Bezos commented. That leaves us pondering over Christmas - what would a space pharmacy look like?

Two-thirds in US can't perform job safely

WORKERS at chain pharmacies across the US have told *CNN* that increased demand for prescriptions, vaccinations and other services without sufficient staff to fulfil those orders has made it nearly impossible for them to do their jobs properly and has created potentially unsafe conditions for pharmacy customers. A US 2022 National Community Pharmacists Association survey showed that nearly 75% of respondents felt they did not have enough time to safely perform clinical duties and patient care. These issues have led to some pharmacists deciding to walk out of CVS and Walgreens pharmacies this autumn, workers said (*PD* 31 Oct). About 70% of prescriptions in the country come from chain retailers like Walgreens, CVS and Walmart,

according to a 2019 Drug Channels Institute report. CVS provided about 25% of all prescriptions, while Walgreens accounted for another 20%. Stores increasingly operate with just one pharmacist behind the counter for a 12-hour shift. American Pharmacists Association CEO Michael Hogue said this week, "they didn't feel confident that they could provide care in a safe environment". Shane Jerominski, a pharmacist who spent a decade working at chain pharmacies including Walgreens and CVS, said, "pharmacists are so overwhelmed and worried that they're going to make a mistake". "It's so easy to make a mistake under those conditions." There's also a general

misconception about what it takes to correctly fill a prescription, as the work goes beyond labelling meds. "It's the nightmare for a pharmacist who's had a busy shift and then goes home and processes what's happened," said Karl Williams, a professor of pharmacy law, ethics and counselling at the Wegmans School of Pharmacy at St. John Fisher University. "To wake up and think 'did I remember to tell a patient about a particular risk?'" "It drives people to leave the practice whether there are legal ramifications or not. "If a patient has been harmed, it's just a horrible outcome." The cost of looking after patients in the US with medication-associated errors is more than US\$40b (A\$59.5b) per annum. *JG*

PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT

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

Hartley's Gripe Water

Hartley's Gripe Water is a natural blend of herbal ingredients of dill seed oil, peppermint oil, chamomile and coriander oil. These herbs have been used safely in commercial infant preparations for many years.

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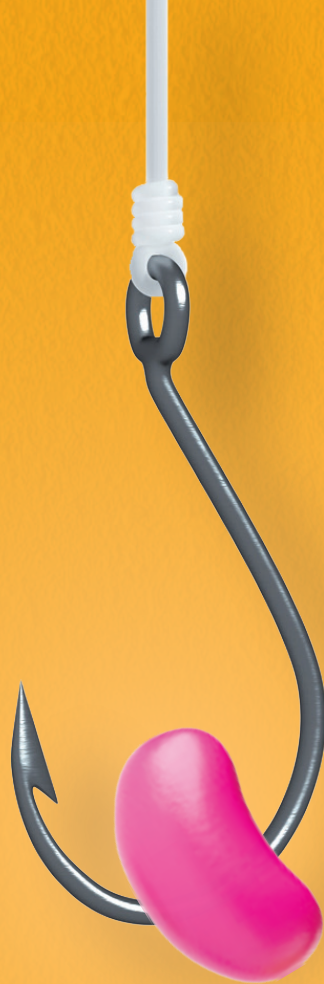
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You don't need milkshakes to bring all the boys (and girls) to town. You just need Australia's favourite jelly beans. In fact, in a recent campaign targeting customers who visited a pharmacy that didn't stock Glucojel, we found they were 23% more likely to hunt down a pharmacy that did on their next visit.

So, if you want feet through your door, you need Glucojel on your shelves.

*Source: Bliss Mobile post campaign reporting



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