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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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## Today's issue of PD

**Pharmacy Daily** today features two pages of the latest news plus a cover wrap from **Symbion**, as well as a full page from **Glucojel**.

## The right bait

**CUSTOMERS** are 23% more likely to look for a pharmacy that stocks Glucojel - the original pharmacy jelly bean. More info on the **last page**.

## Nth Qld in crisis

**PHARMACY** Guild of Australia National President Trent Twomey is calling for "red to be removed" so that pharmacists in the flood-affected regions of Far North Queensland can continue to dispense prescriptions. "I've had six inches worth of muddy floodwaters through my wife's pharmacy, when I have pharmacists...in Kuranda who waded through floodwaters...to dispense prescriptions by the light of a lantern," he told *Sky News Australia*.

"I've got pharmacists who are completely locked in the communities of Mossman and Port Douglas and are trying to do deals with tourism operators...to freight essential medicines from Cairns up by sea...no one's asking for money, no one's asking for a handout, we're just asking for a little bit of red tape to be removed," Twomey said.

# No barriers, Pharmacy Board confirms

**THE** Pharmacy Board of Australia (the Board) has reconfirmed its 2019 position statement on pharmacist prescribing, maintaining it has no regulatory barriers in place for pharmacists to participate in public health initiatives approved by states and territories.

The update was issued in light of the numerous changes to state and territory medicines and poisons legislation in the years since, which have resulted in increased public access to health services delivered by pharmacists, including administering a wider range of vaccines and supplying medications that do not require prescriptions.

The Board reiterated that it does not require pharmacists who take part in pilots, trials and health programs authorised by states and territories to complete any extra prescribing qualifications or other requirements in order to maintain their registration.

The Board said it monitored state and territory legislated pilots, trials, and health programs



involving pharmacists and engaged extensively with state and territory health departments in order to form this position.

Chair Brett Simmonds (pictured) stated, "the Board is pleased to reconfirm its position statement of 2019 that pharmacists are able to participate in pilots, trials and health programs in the jurisdiction in which they practise by completing any

locally required education as CPD without any additional requirements from the Board".

"Pharmacy plays a vital role in the provision of health services and pharmacists provide greater access to the public for these important health interventions.

"The Board also believes there is scope for state and territories to consider further expansions of pharmacy services to address identified areas of public need and such changes to local laws combined with a suitable clinical governance framework can ensure pharmacists can deliver additional services safely."

Simmonds concluded "the Board also maintains its view from the 2019 position statement that future proposals for broader and more complex prescribing may reach the threshold for additional regulation and any such proposal would require collaboration between governments, stakeholders, the public, the profession and the Board". *JM*

## La Trobe launches cancer diagnosis company

**LA TROBE** University in Melbourne has announced the launch of its first major spin-out company, AlleSense, which it says will "revolutionise" medical imaging and has the potential to save millions of lives.

AlleSense uses NanoMslide, the world's first nanofabricated microscope slide, invented by La Trobe researchers Professor Brian Abbey and Dr Eugeniu Balaur,

from the School of Computing, Engineering and Mathematical Sciences and the La Trobe Institute for Molecular Science.

The advanced technology uses colour contrast to easily and quickly identify abnormal cells in a suspect sample, and is expected to help the diagnosis of early stage and difficult-to-diagnose cancers, including breast cancer.

## Symbion serves

**SYMBION** is showcasing its experience and solutions when it comes to helping pharmacies reach their goals.

The wholesaler allows pharmacies to drive retail business while remaining brand independent, and currently services over 3,850 pharmacy customers.

For more information, see the **front page**.

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year

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## Dispensary Corner

A MAJOR pharmacy chain in the United States has landed in hot water for its “reckless” use of facial recognition technology, which resulted in thousands of customers being wrongfully accused of shoplifting.

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has banned Rite Aid from using facial surveillance systems in stores or online for the next five years - the first time the US regulator has ordered any entity to stop using facial recognition.

Rite Aid started secretly using the system in 2012 to identify customers who may have been shoplifting or engaging in other undesirable behaviour.

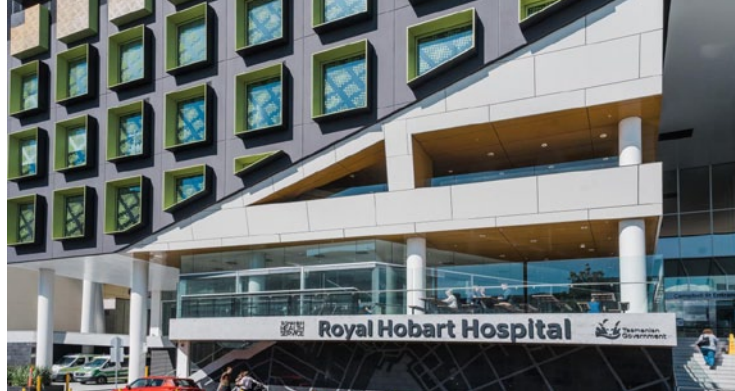
However, the dodgy tech - which relied on a database of low-quality images - generated thousands of false positives, with Black and Asian customers more likely than white customers to be misidentified as people who had shoplifted.

The false alerts led to Rite Aid employees - who weren't informed the system could make mistakes - publicly accusing the “shoplifters”, searching them, ordering them to leave, and/or calling the police.

The FTC said Rite Aid's use of the systems “left its customers facing humiliation and other harms...and put consumers' sensitive information at risk”.

The pharmacy group, which is currently in bankruptcy proceedings, said the program was only used in a few stores and discontinued in 2020, and said it was “pleased to reach an agreement with the FTC and put this matter behind us”.

## RHH \$22 million pharmacy



A MULTIMILLION-DOLLAR pharmacy redevelopment project has kicked off at Tasmania's Royal Hobart Hospital (RHH) to deliver a state-of-the-art hospital pharmacy, including sterile pharmaceutical production facilities.

The Tasmanian Rockliff Liberal Government's RHH Pharmacy Redevelopment Project, part of a long-term plan to build a better health system across the state, includes purpose-built dispensary and sterile production suites.

The pharmacy, which will be constructed on the site of the existing statewide pharmacy and expand into the former Central Sterilising area, will also house Therapeutic Goods Administration accredited manufacturing facilities for jack jumper immunotherapy products for people with jack jumper ant venom allergies.

Hutchinson Builders have now begun site clearing and enabling works on the project, which is expected to reach completion in mid-2025.

“The Royal Hobart Hospital Pharmacy plays a critical role in delivering healthcare to inpatients and outpatients and supporting local and statewide pharmacy services,” Minister for Health, Guy Barnett, commented.

“This pharmacy redevelopment will mean that our hardworking health staff can provide better care, right throughout the hospital, particularly for patients undergoing cancer treatment and patients receiving adult and neonatal intensive care.

“We are also continuing with our innovative approach to healthcare by building new dispensing facilities and clinical support areas, which means the RHH will be able to manufacture products right here in Tasmania,” he added.

The Tas Govt first announced the RHH hospital redevelopment in 2019, at the time allocating a much smaller funding pool of \$3.8 million (PD 28 May 2019). JM

## Pain study caution

AUSTRALIANS are being cautioned about the risks of spinal cord stimulators after Pain Australia recently published a study promoting the benefits of the devices.

Private Healthcare Australia CEO Dr Rachel David said the *Pain Australia Spinal Cord Stimulator Implants Consumer Experience Report*, which was commissioned and fully funded by the Neuromodulation Society of Australia - a group representing the providers of spinal cord stimulators - is “not medical research” and should be interpreted with caution.

“It is a small carefully selected sample of patient stories designed to spruik the continual use of expensive spinal cord stimulators which are known to cause more pain and suffering for a large proportion of the people who receive them,” she said.

“This is a billion-dollar industry that some doctors and medical technology companies profit from, so any consumer research funded by that industry must be heavily scrutinised,” she emphasised.

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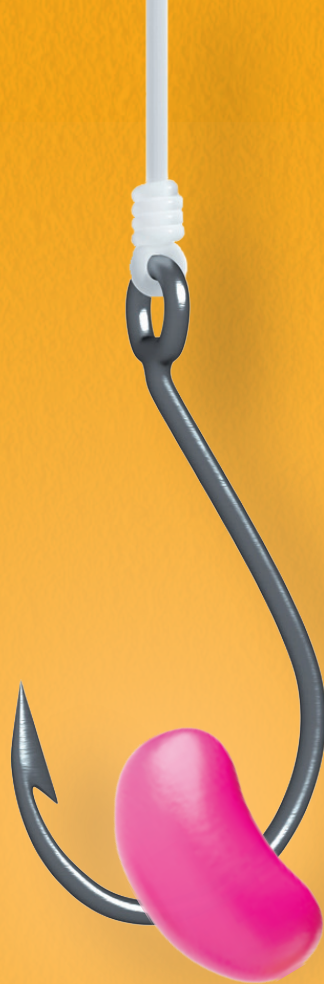
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## TO ATTRACT MORE CUSTOMERS, JUST USE THE RIGHT BAIT.

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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