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### Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features three pages of news.

#### FDA approval

**THIS** week, the US FDA approved Leqembi (lecanemab-irmb) via the Accelerated Approval pathway for the treatment of Alzheimer's disease.

Leqembi is the second of a new category of medications approved for Alzheimer's disease that target the fundamental pathophysiology of the disease.

The results of a Phase 3 randomised, controlled clinical trial to confirm the drug's clinical benefit have recently been reported and the FDA anticipates receiving the data soon.

For more information on the study on Leqembi's efficacy [CLICK HERE](#).

## Antibiotics shortages to continue

A **NATIONWIDE** shortage of some common antibiotics highlights how fragile Australia's supply chain is, said the Pharmacy Guild President, Trent Twomey (**pictured**).

"Several drugs used to treat pneumonia, strep throat, and other infections are in short supply or aren't available at all, forcing many pharmacists to opt for alternatives," he said in an ABC Radio interview this week.

Twomey added that Australia represents just a small market for foreign drug companies.

"Unfortunately; the situation is getting worse for medicines.

"It is a direct result of the fact that we don't make stuff in Australia anymore.

"We are only 2% of the medication market globally.

"We are not really an important market for these global manufacturers," he concluded.

The shortage of oral amoxicillin and cefalexin products continues



despite the TGA's decision to make two Serious Scarcity Substitution Instruments (SSSIs) late last year.

Each SSSI allows a pharmacist to dispense a substitute product containing the same active ingredient to a patient when the prescribed product is unavailable, without prior approval from the prescriber, under certain conditions, the TGA reported.

If the amoxicillin product a patient

was prescribed is unavailable, the pharmacist may give them a different strength or form of amoxicillin; and similarly, for cefalexin.

The SSSI allows a pharmacist to offer to the patient or their carer:

- an alternative amoxicillin syrup or suspension strength when the prescribed one is unavailable;
- amoxicillin 250mg capsules or 1g tablets if the prescribed 500mg capsules are unavailable;
- amoxicillin 250mg or 500mg capsules if the prescribed 1g tablets are unavailable.

The SSSI is in force from 06 Dec 2022 until 31 May 2023.

The TGA may, however, revoke the SSSI before its end date if the serious scarcity is resolved, or safety concerns are identified.

This SSSI is in effect in all states and territories.

For more information on antibiotics shortages and their substitutions [CLICK HERE](#).

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Pasquale De Maria  
Managing Director, Certified Bookkeeper, Pharmacist

## New indication

**THERE** is a new indication for Boehringer Ingelheim's Jardiance 10mg included in the treatment of symptomatic heart failure independent of left ventricular ejection fraction (LVEF), including patients with reduced ejection fraction (HFpEF).

Boehringer reports that this makes Jardiance the first and only medicine in Australia both proven and indicated for heart failure regardless of LVEF to reduce the risk of cardiovascular death or hospitalisation for heart failure, as well as the only SGLT-2 inhibitor registered for the treatment of heart failure regardless of ejection fraction.

HFpEF has proven incredibly difficult to treat and until now there have been limited therapeutic options available.

"This is a long-awaited and major turning point in the management of HFpEF, one of the areas of greatest unmet needs in cardiology," said Associate Prof David Colquhoun, a cardiologist at The Wesley Hospital, Brisbane, and an investigator in clinical trials of Jardiance in HFpEF patients.

## Fibre reduces BP

**A SMALL** Australian trial has shown that adding a type of high-fibre supplement to people's diets helped reduce their blood pressure by changing their gut bacteria.

The study of 20 people were given food for three weeks that either had the high-fibre supplement, a resistant starch called HAMSAB, or contained a placebo (corn starch or regular flour with no added resistant starches).

The group who ate the diet with the resistant starch had a clinically significant drop in their systolic blood pressure.

The authors said this drop in blood pressure is equivalent to taking a blood pressure-lowering drug.

For more information [CLICK HERE](#).

## Guidelines change for kids obesity

**FOR** the first time in over a decade, The American Academy of Pediatrics has published new guidelines recommending the use of weight-loss drugs in children aged 12 years or older for treatment of obesity, which impacts about 14.4m kids and adolescents in the United States and can lead to serious health complications.

The focus of the new guidelines announced this week is on the treatment of obesity, as opposed to prevention.

"I think they are important because there are a number of misunderstandings about exactly what causes obesity and there are some unintended biases, even by medical providers with regard to childhood obesity," said Dr Marc Michalsky of Nationwide Children's Hospital in Columbus, Ohio, a co-author of the guidelines.

The expert group said that therapies such as weight loss pill orlistat, Novo Nordisk's NOVOb.Co (semaglutide) - an injected diabetes treatment repurposed for weight loss under the brand name Wegovy - and the older, generic diabetes medicine metformin could be given in addition to changes in health



behaviour and lifestyle.

"In particular, children with more immediate and life-threatening comorbidities, those who are older, and those affected by more severe obesity may require additional therapeutic options," the group said.

**MEANWHILE** Victoria University research has found when it comes to playing community sport, it seems girls just want to have fun.

The research team tracked more than 5,000 females who participated either in community club gymnastics or football (soccer)

around Australia from 2019 to 2021.

About half of the survey respondents had stopped participating, and the other half were still involved with their sport.

Nearly two-thirds of those who left reported their main reason for stopping - especially for teenagers - was because they were not having fun.

Other major reasons included losing interest, having an unfriendly coach or official, injuries, or feeling too old.

For more information [CLICK HERE](#).

## Nurse guilty!

**THE** Health Care Complaints Commission prosecuted a complaint against nurse Lisa Svensson before the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

It was alleged that between 2014 and 2019, while working at the Northern Beaches District Child and Family Health Service, Svensson inappropriately accessed several electronic health records, and created false entries for patients and their children.

In its decision of 23 Dec 2022, the Tribunal found the complaint proven and found Svensson guilty of unsatisfactory professional conduct and professional misconduct.

For the decision [CLICK HERE](#).

**Travel & Cruise Weekly**

# keep dreaming...

A month-by-month guide to travel through the year, and more destination inspiration for 2023!



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### Dispensary Corner

IF YOU still haven't cleaned up your freshly cut Christmas tree from the recent festive season, there may be a better option than chopping it up and putting it in the green bin.

British tabloid the *Daily Star* is quoting several "top chefs" who reckon it's better to snack on your tree in order to boost your Vitamin C intake.

The report cites Rene Redzepi, the owner of the world's most expensive (and soon-to-close) restaurant, Noma in Copenhagen, who said his eatery has been using pine needles in its menus for more than two decades.

"Think of it as rosemary - you can use it in just about anything," he apparently said.

Other options for the leftover festive ornament include using it in drinks and infusions, as well as making pine ash by burning the trunk in an oven and then using it as a flavouring agent.

The idea has caught on so much that baker Julia Georgallis (pictured) has even written a book - creatively named *How to Eat Your Christmas Tree* - in which she notes that "you can pretty much eat the whole thing".



## HEALTH & BEAUTY

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