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Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features three pages of news plus a full page from PharmXchange.

One stop shop

PHARMXCHANGE has expanded its network by adding the BioCeuticals range. See [page four](#).

Trial to start

THE government has announced that a clinical trial will start this year for a new Omicron-blocking antibody to manufacture Australian-made antivirals to combat COVID-19.

Professor Wai-Hong Tham from the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute leads the consortium's research.

This research is set to grow our antiviral drugs' market. To learn more [CLICK HERE](#).

Respire Rx sets up Aussie subsidiary

A NEW, currently wholly-owned, unlisted public company in Australia, ResolutionRx Ltd, has been established by RespireRx (formerly known as Cortex Pharmaceuticals), reported *BioSpectrum*.

In a series of steps that include, but are not limited to financings, research, clinical development, manufacturing, regulatory and compliance, the company's purpose is to develop compounds that target the body's endocannabinoid system, and in particular, the re-purposing of dronabinol, an endocannabinoid CB1 and CB2 receptor agonist, for the treatment of obstructive sleep apnoea.

The company will contribute certain dronabinol assets and certain liabilities to ResolutionRx, it's reported.

One of the main purposes for the creation of ResolutionRx was to allow it to participate in the Australian research and development tax credit, which in



ResolutionRx's case, is a refund of 43.5% of qualified research and development expenditures as reported on ResolutionRx's Australian tax return.

Further, ResolutionRx is in late stage discussions with an Australian-based fund to establish a finance facility secured by the tax credits in order to finance a substantial percentage of the credit associated with the qualified

expenditures over the course of the research and development timeline in advance of the final receipt of the tax credit funds.

In addition, ResolutionRx is in late-stage negotiations for an equity or equity-linked financing of up to 25% of the research and development budget to be used exclusively to support the research and development budget.

Inherent in this financing is a commitment to list ResolutionRx on the Australian Stock Exchange (ASX).

ResolutionRx's intent is to list on the ASX and one or more public exchanges outside of Australia, including the United States.

The company has entered into a letter of intent and is preparing a final, definitive agreement with an Australian headquartered, bespoke specialty contract research organisation exclusively focused on cannabinoid and psychedelic clinical research, *BioSpectrum* concluded.



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Dispensary Corner

HOSPITAL and GP waiting times in the UK have blown out so much that Ukrainian refugees are opting to return back to the war-torn country for medical treatment rather than wait for Britain's public healthcare system, according to UK news outlet *inews*.

After Russia invaded Ukraine almost 12 months ago, the UK Government announced that all refugees from the country would be offered full and free access to the National Health Service (NHS).

However a crisis within the system has been compounded by a series of recent strikes, causing some Ukrainians with acute conditions to look to their homeland, where they can be seen immediately by a doctor.

Opposition politicians have seized on the issue as a way to criticise PM Rishi Sunak, who has pledged to address waiting lists for appointments.

PROTESTS in Sri Lanka look to have proven lucrative for sellers of shampoo, with demonstrators washing their hair with the blasts from water cannons in a gesture of defiance.

The island nation is in the midst of an economic crisis, with police attempting to control a large crowd during a visit by PM Ranil Wickremesinghe to Jaffna University this week.

Images posted on Twitter captured the moment, with the caption "when Sri Lankan police fired water cannons on a protest in Jaffna today...the Tamils pulled out shampoo".

AMA calls out vaping

THE Australian Medical Association (AMA) has called for stronger, strictly enforced regulations on vaping, telling the federal government that Australia is at risk of losing the public health battle on vaping if strong action isn't taken.

AMA President Prof Stephen Robson explained Australia was a world-leader on tobacco and nicotine control for decades, but has dropped the ball with vaping.

"Vaping is not harmless, it is not safe, it is not part of tobacco control," Prof Robson said.

In its submission to the TGA consultation on potential reforms to the regulation of nicotine vaping products (NVPs), the AMA said it had repeatedly advocated for regulations to be changed to limit access to NVPs (which have a poor evidence base as a smoking cessation tool) by banning the personal importation of NVPs and reducing the allowed concentration of nicotine.

"The Personal Importation Scheme bypasses many of the product standards outlined in regulations, such as labelling, packaging, and record-keeping

requirements and it's incredibly challenging to enforce," Prof Robson said.

While the TGA consultation focuses primarily on NVPs, the AMA supports introducing controls on the importation of all vaping products through customs.

"This would begin to address the public health challenge of tackling both non-nicotine vapes and nicotine products.

"Nicotine and non-nicotine vaping products are regulated differently which complicates and hinders progress on this issue," Prof Robson explained.

"Vaping products are a gateway to smoking for young people and there are significant risks from vaping that warrant much stronger regulation.

"We know many products marketed as not containing nicotine, actually contain nicotine, and products have also been found to contain prohibited chemicals that can cause serious harm, like vitamin E acetate and diacetyl, which can cause serious damage to the lungs," he concluded.

For more information on the TGA consultation **CLICK HERE**.

Can't do bacon

PROCESSED meats are a staple in Australian diets, but according to experts at UNSW Sydney they contribute to cancer risk.

In 2015, the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) at the World Health Organization assessed more than 800 studies to understand the link between processed meats and cancer.

Ultimately the IARC classified processed meat as a carcinogen, meaning that they found sufficient evidence that eating processed meats causes colorectal cancer.

The IARC's Working Group was chaired by Prof Bernard Stewart from UNSW Medicine & Health, an internationally recognised expert in environmental carcinogenesis, who explained that, "processed meats, at least historically, have been processed using sodium nitrite and nitrite can react with molecules in the body to form N-nitroso compounds, which are cancer-causing substances".

Cooking processed meat, particularly over high heat or an open flame, can also be part of the problem, he said.

To learn more **CLICK HERE**.



Plasma treatment may prevent deaths

A US and Italian review and re-analysis of existing studies on convalescent plasma treatment for COVID-19 found it may help prevent death among immunocompromised patients.

The new research published in the *JAMA Network Open* included eight controlled studies and 138 case studies, and found that transfusion of COVID-19 convalescent plasma was linked to a decrease in risk of fatality in

immunocompromised patients, compared with control groups who were not given the plasma treatment.

These findings suggest that transfusion of COVID-19 convalescent plasma may help prevent death among immunocompromised patients whose condition does not respond to other treatments, the authors concluded.

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Time's up bugs!

IT'S 'lights out' for antibiotic-resistant superbugs as next-generation light-activated nanotech proves it can eradicate some of the most notorious and potentially deadly bacteria in the world.

Developed by the University of South Australia and published in *Pharmaceutics*, the new light therapy can eliminate antibiotic-resistant superbugs, golden staph and *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* by 500,000-fold and 100,000-fold respectively.

Globally, about 1.27m people die as a result of antibiotic-resistant bacteria.

Lead researcher, UniSA's Dr Muhammed Awad, said the new light therapy will be a game-changer for millions of people worldwide.

"Our photodynamic technology works differently, harnessing the energy of light to generate highly reactive oxygen molecules that eradicate microbial cells and kill deadly bacteria, without harming human cells."

UniSA's Prof Clive Prestidge said that the technology has some key advantages over conventional antibiotics and other light therapies.

"The new therapy is created in an oil that is painted on a wound as a lotion.

"When laser light is applied to the lotion, it creates reactive oxygen species which act as an alternative to conventional antibiotics," Prestidge said.

"Our approach uses food grade lipids to make nano-carriers for the photo-active compound," he said.

To learn more [CLICK HERE](#).

Reduce Hep C with DAA

THE importance of access to highly effective direct acting antiviral (DAA) treatments to help eliminate hepatitis C (HCV) among people living with HIV (PLHIV), has been demonstrated in new research led by Burnet Institute, published in the journal *eClinicalMedicine*.

Subsidised in Australia through the PBS, DAAs that cure up to 95% of patients have been available since 2013, prompting the World Health Organization to set ambitious targets to eliminate HCV as a public health threat.

The collaborative multinational longitudinal study is the first formal evaluation of the impact of DAAs on HCV in more than 45,000 PLHIV and 250,000 person-years of follow-up in five countries, including Australia, between 2010 and 2019.

It found that broad DAA access was associated with an approximate 50% reduction in HCV incidence, and that DAAs have a 'treatment as prevention' effect on primary HCV incidence.

Treatment as prevention entails treating as many individuals as possible for their hepatitis C infection to prevent further transmission and reduce the number of new infections in the population.

Study co-lead author, Burnet Postdoctoral Fellow, Dr Daniela van Santen said PLHIV are a key population for HCV elimination because they experience much higher rates of HCV infection and HCV-related mortality than HIV-negative individuals.

"Our findings suggest that limited access to direct-acting antivirals is unlikely to substantially reduce hepatitis C incidence where HCV transmission is ongoing, even at low levels," Dr van Santen said.



"Broad access to direct acting antivirals, on the other hand, has an immediate and lasting 'treatment as prevention' effect on hepatitis C incidence among people living with HIV in the first years of broad DAA availability."

Co-lead author, Burnet Institute Senior Research Officer, Dr Rachel Sacks-Davis said the new study is significant for filling a gap in empirical data on progress towards elimination and the role of DAAs in reducing the incidence of hepatitis C in the country.

"Continued monitoring is needed, but, because of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on incidence trends, and whether DAAs will continue to drive incidence reductions after 2019 is largely unknown," Dr Sacks-Davis said.

While modelling studies suggest global HCV elimination targets for 2030 are unlikely to be met, the new study shows that countries in the International Collaboration on Hepatitis C Elimination in HIV Cohorts - Australia, France, the Netherlands, Spain and Switzerland - are on track to meet WHO's target to reduce the incidence of hepatitis C by 80% by 2030 compared to 2015 among people with HIV, based on surpassing the 30% incidence reduction progress target set by WHO in 2019.

To learn more [CLICK HERE](#).

Pharmacy Guild Update

Guild President to address NAPSA Congress

PHARMACY Guild National President, Professor Trent Twomey, says he is looking forward to this week's NAPSA Congress now underway in Canberra.

Professor Twomey has already given a speech to open the congress and has reflected on his first NAPSA congress with great fondness.

"I look back nineteen years ago, when I attended my first NAPSA Congress in Adelaide and it really was the beginning, not only of my career as a leader in the profession but it really did mark the entrance of me personally to the profession," he said.

The Pharmacy Guild is a Platinum Sponsor of the Congress which began yesterday and runs until the end of this week.

There will be five interactive workshops, an education session on the Future of Pharmacy, a NAPE workshop as well as a Tradeshow Stall with free showbags.

"My National Councillors and I will be there, and we look forward to catching up with the entire leadership team of the student body," Professor Twomey said.

For more information look up "NAPSA Congress" on Facebook and Instagram.



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