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Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features two pages of news, plus a front cover wrap from BioCeuticals.

Declining supply

THE Pharmaceutical Defence Limited (PDL) Professional Officers have been recently taking calls from the profession, seeking advice on declining the 60-day medicine supply.

The pharmacists believe the prescribing of a 60-day supply does not align with the PBS-restricted benefit listing.

The officers stated that the PBS information makes no reference to pharmacists "interpreting or policing the prescribing restrictions".

PDL explained that the PBS information clearly stated that it is the "prescriber's responsibility to determine if a patient is entitled to receive a restricted benefit".

Therefore, a pharmacist's considerations regarding supply should only focus on patient safety, PDL confirmed.

Pharmacists should consider factors such as the indication, prior medication history, clinical decisions made by the prescriber and the patient's understanding of the risks and benefits of the medication.

PDL advises that any discussion should focus on the pharmacist's obligation to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the patient.

In addition, the broader financial impacts of 60-Day Dispensing are unlikely to be considered a valid reason for declining supply if a regulatory complaint is lodged.

Qld extends influenza vax

THE Qld Govt will invest \$40 million to extend the free influenza vaccination program to 2024 for all Queenslanders aged six months and over.

The Guild's Qld Branch President, Chris Owen, welcomed the Palaszczuk Govt's continued commitment to the program and hoped this early announcement would go a long way to increasing the uptake of vaccinations.

"At a time of suboptimal influenza vaccination rates, the 2024 free program will allow all Queenslanders to access this important vaccination at a community pharmacy in the lead-up to, and throughout the flu season."

"We would like to thank the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services Shannon Fentiman for her commitment to the program and by making this initiative free it ensures there are no cost-of-living barriers for Queenslanders in putting their health first," Owen added.



"The advance notice will also enable Queensland families to plan ahead and help reduce the spread of the virus."

PSA Qld President Shane MacDonald welcomed the "common-sense approach to vaccination coverage, and funding certainty ahead of the 2024 flu season will mean that pharmacists can adequately prepare and meet increased demand".

"Knowing that every patient will have access to a vaccination at no cost, pharmacists can start having conversations now to encourage patients well before the start of the flu season," he said. JG

SA MP thanks many local pharmacists



SOUTH Australia's Health Minister Chris Picton, supported by Tung Ngo MLC, and SA's Chief Pharmacist Naomi Burgess hosted an event for pharmacists this week in the historic Balcony Room of the state's Parliament House, which many saw from the inside for the first time.

The event recognised the hard work of South Australian

pharmacists supporting the healthcare system and patient wellbeing.

Picton said, "I'd like to say thank you for keeping your doors open and working tirelessly when other businesses and healthcare services could not during COVID."

"There are also some exciting opportunities coming up for pharmacists in South Australia."

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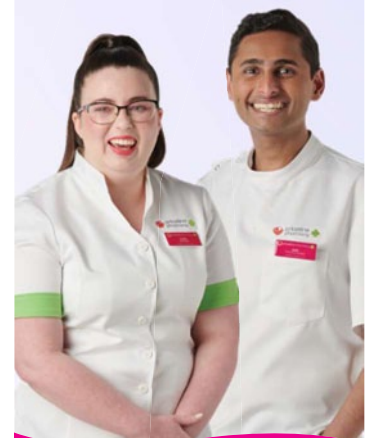
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Dispensary Corner

A GEORGIA restaurant is gaining national attention for charging customers a fee for "bad parenting," reported NBC29.

The menu at Toccoa Riverside Restaurant - about two hours north of Atlanta - offers a selection of dishes like steak, trout and other American fare.

But look a little closer, and you'll notice something else.

At the bottom of the menu is an adult surcharge for customers "unable to parent," followed by three dollar signs.

"Adult surcharge: For adults unable to parent \$\$\$," the menu reads.

According to some guests, the exact amount is at the restaurant's discretion, with some charged \$50 (A\$77).

Several *Google Reviews* said they were unhappy with the charge with one review reading, "if you have children, absolutely avoid this place at all costs."

"Holy moly - the most disrespectful owner made a huge scene in front of the entire restaurant because our children were 'running through the restaurant' - they were down by the river.

"We were told we need to 'go to Burger King and Walmart,' and that we were bad parents."

"They have a \$50 surcharge for 'bad children'."

Another reviewer claimed he was charged \$50, even though his children were well behaved.

The restaurant owner wanted to emphasise the charge is not for kids but for adults who "don't know how to parent," reported the news outlet.

Ubiquinol pivotal in fertility

WITH World Fertility Day yesterday, naturopathic practitioner Dr Leah Hechtman shed light on male fertility, and how integrative health can support the outcome of a successful fertility journey.

She said one in six Australian couples struggle to conceive within 12 months of trying to fall pregnant, and infertility rates are growing globally at an alarming rate.

Amid the plethora of supplements available in pharmacies, Hechtman stated that over 90 studies show that ubiquinol is a key ingredient in supporting male fertility.

"Ubiquinol plays a pivotal role in the spermatogenesis process, which is imperative for sperm count, motility and morphology.

"In fact, the neck of the sperm holds the highest level of ubiquinol in the male body," she added.



"Ubiquinol is a natural antioxidant found in the mitochondria of cells.

"As we age and are exposed to higher levels of oxidative stress, our levels of ubiquinol decline," Hechtman explained.

"To ensure the sperm's quality and vitality is preserved, and safeguarded from oxidative stress, it is important that healthcare practitioners understand the role of ingredients and antioxidants that can support sperm through its journey towards fertilisation," concluded Hechtman. *JG*

Jail sentences

THE boss and three other officials of an Indonesian firm whose cough syrup was linked to the deaths of over 200 children have been sentenced to jail, BBC has reported.

They were handed two-year prison sentences and fined 1bn Indonesian rupiah (\$A98,065).

The firm, Afi Farma, was accused of producing cough syrups containing excess amounts of toxic substances.

The company's lawyer said they denied negligence and the firm was considering whether to appeal.

During 2021 and 2022, certain batches of cough syrup contained 96% to 99% ethylene glycol which is toxic, and the company did not test the ingredients.

Dunkley wins big

KAY Dunkley has won the prestigious Fred J Boyd Award for her unwavering dedication to the profession and inspirational leadership of the Pharmacists' Support Service.

Presented at the Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia's Medicines Management 2023 conference yesterday, President Tom Simpson said the organisation's highest award was given in recognition of Dunkley's career spanning 40 years, over which she has held numerous roles in pharmacy governance and lent expertise to more than 25 research projects.

"Kay's compassionate leadership radiates across the profession and she embodies the very best of our profession."

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