

Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features two pages of news.

Phage progress

AN INTERNATIONAL research team has identified potential new "weapons" in the "arms race" for antibiotics and possible future therapies for a more balanced gut microbiome and human health.

Using DNA sequencing, research led by Flinders University has singled out a few tiny gut viruses, from among hundreds of common *Crassvirales* bacteriophages or phages found in the human digestive system, that target specific bacterial hosts.

This paves the way for phage therapy to target 'bad' or unbalanced bacteria in the gut, along with possible solutions to antimicrobial resistance when antibiotics no longer work - see more [HERE](#).

TWC raises pertussis vax awareness

HIGHLIGHTING Whooping Cough Day this week, TerryWhite Chemmart (TWC) and the Immunisation Foundation of Australia are urging customers to take action and ensure they and their families are safeguarded against whooping cough.

Over the years, the concerted efforts of awareness campaigns and dedicated advocates, including Catherine Hughes, Director of the Immunisation Foundation of Australia and Light 4 Riley, have contributed to an increase in Australia's adoption of the whooping cough vaccination.

This has resulted in a decline in reported cases, demonstrating the power of community action, stated TWC's Chief Pharmacist Brenton Hart (**pictured**).

However, as the holiday season approaches, bringing gatherings of family and friends, the importance of vaccination cannot be overstated, he stressed.

As Hart pointed out "it's

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important to understand how highly infectious whooping cough or pertussis is and we often see many patients in our pharmacies who are well overdue for their booster vaccination.

"Advising pharmacy customers to be up-to-date with their pertussis vaccination is an effective way to prevent infection and its potential complications, as older children and adults who are not vaccinated are often the source of infection in infants," Hart added.

Hughes emphasised the importance of this partnership, stating, "our mission is to protect and educate".

"We've made substantial progress, but we're not done yet. "The support of TWC in promoting Whooping Cough Day and beyond will help us reach more Australians and reinforce the significance of vaccination." JG



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Cost of menopause

A **SENATE** inquiry is set to examine the impact of menopause and is due to report in Sep 2024.

The terms of reference cover several issues including awareness, economic cost, physical impacts, mental and emotional wellbeing, caregiving responsibilities, govt policies and programs, and cultural factors affecting the condition - see more [HERE](#).

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Dispensary Corner

AN AUSTRALIAN farmer says he is lucky to be alive after repelling a crocodile attack by biting back at the animal. Cattle producer Colin Deveraux spent a month in Darwin Royal Hospital after being bitten on the leg by a 3.2m saltwater crocodile in the Northern Territory. Deveraux told *ABC News* that he was near the Finnis River when he was bitten. At first, he tried kicking the crocodile in the ribs with his other foot - before biting its eyelid in his struggle to survive. "I was in such an awkward position...but by accident, my teeth caught his eyelid. "It was pretty thick, like holding onto leather, but I jerked back on his eyelid and he let go. "I leapt away and took off with great steps up to where my car was," said Deveraux. "He chased me for a bit, maybe 4m, but then stopped." Deveraux said he used a towel and some rope to stop the bleeding in his leg before his brother drove him 130km north to the hospital.

Early intervention needed



YESTERDAY, pharmacist and Founder of Pharmacy Addressing Loneliness and Social-isolation (PALS) Jenny Kirschner (pictured), spoke about loneliness to over 70 grade two students aged eight to nine years at a local primary school. According to the *State of the Nation (Australia) Social Connection Report 2023*, young people aged 18-24 years report the highest levels of loneliness. "It would, therefore, seem clear that we need early interventions," commented Kirschner. "We believe that early education on loneliness should be an integral part of a Social Emotional Learning or SEL curriculum. "This will help to introduce the word loneliness, provide an

understanding of the experience and educate on how to respond to loneliness," explained Kirschner. Introducing the word loneliness into a child's vocabulary will help to reduce the stigma and shame of the loneliness experienced later on in a child's life, she added. The children shared and described words such as feeling invisible, heartbroken, sad, excluded, scared and "it was soon pretty obvious who in the classroom already had their own experiences with loneliness," she noted. Given the health consequences of loneliness, it is a health imperative that healthcare professionals like pharmacists play a role in preventing and addressing the condition, she concluded. *JG*

MedSafetyWeek

THE TGA teams up annually with medicines safety organisations and regulators around the world to promote #MedSafetyWeek. This year's event is on until 12 Nov and promotes reporting of medicine side effects or adverse events by consumers and healthcare professionals. Pharmacovigilance Branch Head, Elspeth Kay, said #MedSafetyWeek had grown massively since its inception. "What started out as 32 medicine regulators in 2017 has grown to include 100 organisations from 88 countries this year," said Kay. "People became more alert to the issue of adverse events during the COVID-19 pandemic and learned how to report. "This helped us greatly in tracking the safety profile of vaccines," she noted. "We ask everyone including pharmacy customers to have a discussion with their friends and family to raise awareness. "I'm confident the non-English translations of the campaign materials will help the message spread more widely," Kay concluded.

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