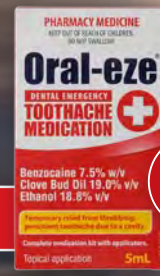


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Obstacles linger

BARRIERS to accessing potentially life-saving support persist, according to new research into suicidality in the LGBTIQ+ community.

CLICK HERE to learn why LGBTIQ+ Aussies are at 20 times greater risk of suicide.

Asthma treatment update

MARKING National Asthma Awareness Week (01-07 Sep), the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) has launched updated treatment guidelines for pharmacists supplying salbutamol and terbutaline inhalers to patients suffering from asthma.

The updated treatment guidelines reflect the new Professional Practice Standards and include updated information about over-reliance on short-acting beta2-agonists (SABA) (**PD** 10 Aug).

PSA National President Dr Fei Sim said pharmacists have an increasingly important role to play in supporting patients to move away from relievers to preventers.

"Around 2.7m or 11% of Australians suffer from asthma, with PBS data indicating a growing reliance on relievers as treatment," Sim said.

"Over-reliance on SABAs increases the risk of severe asthma flare-ups and reduces the effectiveness of emergency treatments.

"The updated treatment guidelines support pharmacists to identify when it is appropriate to supply reliever inhalers to patients, and when their asthma may not be appropriately controlled.

"The guidelines reinforce the importance of checking asthma symptom control, adherence, and inhaler technique every time.

"As the most accessible of healthcare practitioners, community pharmacists are well placed to play a greater role in patient education and awareness of asthma-related harms, identify opportunities for clinical intervention and improve the safe

and effective use of inhalers.

"When undertaking complex medication reviews, credentialled pharmacists are also best placed to make recommendations to optimise the use of treatments and management of asthma.

The PSA is urging all pharmacists to familiarise themselves with the updated guidelines, available **HERE**.

MEANWHILE, with Women's Health Week (04-08 Sep) also in focus, the PSA has launched the NSW - Contraception Essentials training as onboarding begins for the next stage of the NSW Pharmacy Trial.

The statewide trial, run by the University of Newcastle, authorises pharmacists participating in the trial to continue a prescription for the resupply of certain oral contraceptives for eligible women aged from 18 to 35 years.

PSA New South Wales President Luke Kelly urged pharmacists to complete their training with PSA ahead of the trial's start date.

"PSA has developed a full training course tailored to the NSW oral contraceptive trial, arming pharmacists with the latest clinical information and giving them the skills and knowledge for the continuation of contraception," Kelly explained.

NSW Pharmacists can enrol in the NSW - Contraception Essentials training program, **HERE**. JG

Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features four pages of the latest news.

New vax resource

SERVICES Australia has a new Routine Childhood Immunisation - health professionals' kit, available **HERE**, to support pharmacists when in conversation with parents and carers about childhood immunisation.

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Early bird opens for Guild's APP2024

EARLY bird registration is now open for next year's Australian Pharmacy Professional Conference and Trade Exhibition (APP2024), which is taking place on the Gold Coast from Thu 14 Mar through to Sun 17 Mar.

Moving early to register will enable delegates to save up to \$120 off the full conference registration cost, while still accessing all conference sessions and recordings, the trade exhibition and the Welcome Reception, the Guild said.

In addition, the first 200 delegates to book will also receive an extra 10% off the early bird price by entering the code FIRST200 when registering online.

Conference Convenor Kos Sclavos is looking forward to APP2024 with some keynote speakers already locked in.

"With early bird registrations now open, I'm starting the countdown to APP2024," Sclavos said.

"The conference theme for 2024 is 'Navigating the future together'.



"This theme will be reflected in the conference's education program, which will focus on the future of the pharmacy industry as we commence the 8CPA.

"I'm very pleased to announce that we have secured two amazing keynote speakers - Thai cave rescue diver and anaesthetist Dr Richard "Harry" Harris (**pictured**), and human rights lawyer, retired British Army officer and hostage survivor, Rabia Saddique," Sclavos explained.

"Other motivational speakers, industry leaders, and business and clinical experts will be added to the program in the coming weeks.

"Keep an eye out for upcoming speaker and program announcements on our website and in our conference e-bulletins," added Sclavos.

APP is the Pharmacy Guild of Australia's flagship event and is known to be the largest pharmacy conference and trade exhibition in the Southern Hemisphere.

In 2023, the conference attracted more than 7,000 Australian and international delegates.

The conference offers a four-day education program plus pre-conference workshops, more than 450-stand trade exhibitions and two exciting social functions, including the well-anticipated, Street Party.

As planning continues, the conference program will be made available in Nov.

Book at the APP2024 site, [HERE](#). JG

Sugar tax push

THE AMA has told a parliamentary inquiry the \$3.1 billion cost to Australia's health system from diabetes could be mitigated through the introduction of a sugar tax, a much stronger focus on prevention and addressing inequities in the health system.

More than 1.3 million Australians live with diabetes (one in 20) and two in three adults, and one in four children are overweight or obese, which can lead to type 2 diabetes, heart disease, cancer and other chronic diseases.

The AMA's submission to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Health, Aged Care and Sport's Inquiry into Diabetes in Australia showed that the health data pointed to preventable disease resulting from people being overweight and/or obese accounted for 18% of health spending totalling \$4.3 billion.

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Climate crisis

THE World Meteorological Organization (WMO) has declared the last three-month period the hottest in the history of Earth.

Warning of the consequences of extreme heat on our health, WMO has raised the alarm on air pollution and supercharged temperatures.

Dr Kimberly Humphrey, an Emergency Medicine Physician and public health professional in Adelaide, said, "through the compounding effects of heat, that intensify pollution's harmful influence on air quality and detrimentally affect heart, lungs, and kidney function, the toll of extreme temperatures on human health is unfathomable".

"Vulnerable groups like the elderly, children, and the socially isolated will bear the brunt, along with outdoor workers and athletes - we are at a critical juncture," she said.

APC seeks more feedback

THE Australian Pharmacy Council (APC) has announced the commencement of its second round of public consultation for the development of the Accreditation Standards for prescriber education programs, [HERE](#).

APC Chief Executive Officer, Bronwyn Clark said the Council received a great deal of valuable feedback from the first round of consultation, which has informed the draft Accreditation Standards and Performance Outcomes, which are now published.

"I really encourage people to contribute to this round," Clark said.

"It is important that the standards we develop for these education programs meet the expectations of the public, the profession, the regulators, and the health system," explained Clark.

The consultation is open to all stakeholders and interested people.

To ensure a wide range of responses, APC is gathering



feedback through a variety of ways including an online survey, in-person, virtually at APC's Stakeholder Consultation Forum on 15 Sep, [HERE](#), or in writing.

The second round of consultation will close at 5pm AEST on 28 Sep.

There will be three public consultation rounds and a summary of the major themes coming out will be published by APC.

To contribute or learn more about the project, see [HERE](#). *JG*

Festival of Care

A NEW festival is prioritising the wellbeing of healthcare workers in hospitals in Sydney's southeast.

The Festival of Care is bringing creative arts-based interventions to the Sydney and Sydney Eye Hospitals (11-14 Sep), and the Randwick Campus which is the Prince of Wales Hospital, Mental Health Services and Royal Hospital for Women (15-22 Sep), to help staff reduce stress, and to recognise their contribution.

The festival, previously held at St George and Sutherland Hospitals, provides a 'taster' of experiential tools to help frontline health workers manage anxiety, trauma and burnout in the wake of COVID-19, said the project co-lead Scientia Prof Jill Bennett, Director of the Big Anxiety Research Centre at the University of NSW.

See more information, [HERE](#).

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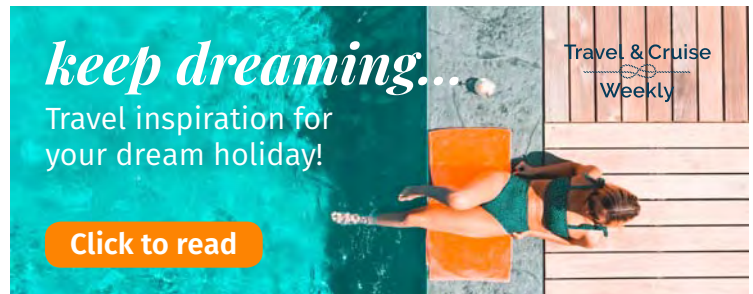


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Dispensary Corner

IN DINGY internet cafes, jampacked office spaces or at home, thousands of young workers in the Philippines log on to annotate the masses of data that American companies need to train their artificial intelligence models, *The Washington Post* has reported.

The workers differentiate pedestrians from palm trees in videos used to develop the algorithms for automated driving; they label images so AI can generate representations of politicians and celebrities; they edit chunks of text to ensure language models like ChatGPT don't churn out gibberish.

More than 2m people in the Philippines perform this type of "crowdwork," according to informal government estimates, as part of AI's vast underbelly.

While AI is often thought of as human-free machine learning, the technology actually relies on the labor-intensive efforts of a workforce spread across much of the Global South and often subject to exploitation.

Companies like US Scale AI pays workers at extremely low rates, routinely delays or withholds payments and provides few channels for workers to seek recourse, stated *The Washington Post*.



Drug duo may heighten risk of clots

WOMEN that take common painkillers combined with hormonal contraception may be at greater risk of venous thromboembolism, or blood clots that form in the veins, a Danish study published in the *British Medical Journal* (BMJ) has recently found.

More specifically, the study showed that the risk increased in women using combined oral contraceptives containing third or fourth generation progestins, but lower in women using progestin-only tablets, implants and coils, alongside the non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) ibuprofen, diclofenac, and naproxen.

The study's researchers were quick to point out that the absolute risk is low, particularly in developing serious blood clots, even in women who are using 'high-risk' hormonal contraception, but felt that, due to the widespread use of both hormonal contraception and NSAIDs, women should be advised of the potential drug interaction.

A/Prof Ashraf Ghanem from the University of Canberra explained there will always be risks that have to be considered against the benefits of medication.

"Hormonal contraceptive drugs



contain hormones like estrogen and progestin that inhibit ovulation (the release of an egg from an ovary)," Ghanem said.

"It is well known that estrogen and progestogens have been linked to increased risks of blood clots as they increase the level of clotting factors."

He added, however, that there were key factors that put this study at risk.

Those included the lack of information around smoking and obesity in those studied as well as the fact that there was "no evidence of drug interaction between the two elements".

A statement released about the study admitted as much, saying, "this is an observational study, so can't establish cause, and the researchers highlight several limitations, such as missing information... which they say may have affected their results".

In absolute terms, the study found that NSAID use was associated with four extra venous thromboembolic events per week per 100,000 women not using hormonal contraception, 11 extra events in women using medium risk hormonal contraception, and 23 extra events in women using high risk hormonal contraception. *DF*

AIHW Board Chair

NICOLA Roxon, former Federal Health Minister from 2007-2011, has been named as the new Chair of the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW).

Current minister Mark Butler said he was delighted at the appointment, saying "Roxon brings considerable experience to the role as she has led significant reform in the introduction of tobacco plain packaging".

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